

THE
EVIL and *DANGER*
OF
Stage = Plays :

Shewing their Natural Tendency to Destroy
RELIGION,

And introduce a General
Corruption of Manners ;

In almost Two Thousand *Instances*, taken
from the *Plays* of the two last Years,
against all the *Methods* lately used for
their *Reformation*.

By *Arthur Bedford*, M. A. Chaplain to his Grace
Wriothesly Duke of Bedford; and Vicar of *Temple*
in the City of *Bristol*.

Ovid. *Metam.* lib. i.
Cuncta prius tentanda, sed immedicabile vulnus
Ense recidendum est, ne pars sincera trabatur.

Printed and Sold by *W. Bonny*, and the Booksellers of *Bristol*. 1706.



R18367

TO THE

READER.

I Have endeavour'd in the following Sheets, to give a short Account of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage, in the two last Years: And as the eminent Labours of Mr. Collier and others, have justly alarm'd the Nation; so I hope, that my weak Endeavours may be in some Measure serviceable, for their farther Conviction. What the Success hereof will be, I must leave to God, whose Cause it is, and who is oftentimes pleas'd to make Use of mean Instruments, for the Vindication of his Glory. I expect to be reproach'd as others have been, who have gone before me on this Subject; however, I have this Comfort, That I have acted sincerely, and discharged my Conscience herein; and indeed I have thought my self under some solemn Obligations, to set forth

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these Devices of Satan in their proper Colours.

First, *As I profess my self to be a Christian. I have solemnly promised to renounce the Devil and all his Works, the Poms and Vanities of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh, and consequently am obliged to oppose those Places where the Devil is honoured, by Prayers to him, and Praises of him; where the Heathen Gods are adored in all their Pomp and Grandeur; where Religion is undermin'd, Vice is encouraged, and more particularly, Adultery and Whoredom is pleaded for with all possible Industry.*

Secondly, *As I have the Honour to be intrusted by God in the Work of the Ministry. In this Station I am oblig'd to oppose every thing which is contrary to his Honour, which hath a Tendency to Atheism, and to render the Holy Scriptures and all revealed Religion contemptible. It hath pleased God to*

(a) Ezek. place me as (a) a Watchman; I have 33, 1 to 10. accordingly given Notice of the Sword approaching, (i. e.) of those Methods, which, if not prevented, will provoke God to enter into Judgment. Whether they who frequent those Places, will take Warning

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Warning hereby, or not, I cannot tell. However, I have this Satisfaction; their blood must be upon their own heads, if they slight it: I have delivered my own soul.

Thirdly, The actual Building of a Play-House in this City, and their frequent Actings near it, as well as at the Bath, hath been another Inducement. These Emissaries travel from Place to Place throughout the Land, as if they designed to sow their Tares in every Town, and therefore it is high Time to shew the Consequences thereof. The Enemy lay sometime without our Gates, and is now come into (b) the City, in Defiance of the Magistrates: And as it hath pleased God by his Providence to place me herein; so I thought my self as well as others, to be more immediately concerned on this Occasion.

(b) Bristol.

Having therefore thus discharg'd my Duty, I thank God, I am very easy, and value not all the Calumnies, Censures and Reproaches, which have been, are, or may be cast upon me for the same. I am sure, that none of these things can hurt me, or destroy that inward Peace and Satisfaction, which is above all outward Accidents. I know, that the Holy Jesus

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was reviled and slandered, and therefore
(c) *Matth.* I consider, that (c) It is enough for the
10. 25. disciple that be as his master, and the
servant as his lord; *and that he saith*

(d) *Matth.* (d) Blessed are ye, when men shall
5. 10, 11, 12. revile you, and persecute you, and say
all manner of evil against you falsely
for my sake; *and commands all who*
thus suffer, to rejoyce and be exceeding
glad, because their reward is great in
heaven, and thus the Prophets were per-
secuted, who were in former Ages.

I am the better satisfied, that it is
the Cause of God, which I have espoused,
because it exposeth such as are engaged
therein, to the Censures and Aspersions of
wicked Men, and such as scruple no
Falsity, when they endeavour to vilify
their Adversaries. And I must as freely
own, that had it not been his Cause, I
was the most unfit Person of any, to be
engaged in it. The Poets, whom I deal
with, are own'd to be Men of the greatest
Parts, Wit and Ingenuity, and can there-
fore paint over a bad Cause, that its
Deformity is not easily discovered. And
therefore as these Flashes of Wit, and
modern Accomplishments are what I do
not affect; so the Success which these my
Endeavours may meet with, and the
Good,

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Good, which I hope, they may do, ought not in the least to be ascrib'd to me; but wholly to that God, (e) who hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and who hath chosen the base things of the world, and things which are despised, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things which are, that no flesh should glory in his presence. I must therefore desire the Reader, to pray to God, for a Blessing on this Design, to discover these Wiles of Satan, and if he finds his Prayers answered, let him give God the Glory.

(e) 1 Cor.
1. 27, 28.
29.

When I first engaged in this Controversy, the common Censure was, that I said more than I could prove. Whether I have proved what I have said let others judge. I might have given larger Proof, if I had not confined my self to so narrow a Compass. However, I hope, that for the Future, when a Clergy Man preacheth against the Play-House, he may be believed, and not be put to the Trouble of proving the same by another Collection.

Whatever some Men may urge in Vindication of the Stage, I must believe, that the Poets cannot but in their own Consciences think themselves lightly guilt-

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(f) The Lawyers Fortune, pag 37, line 11, &c.

rr, and justly censur'd; I am sure, that they are sometimes, tho' seldom, so ingenious, as to confess it. One (f) tells us, that the Poets comply with the People, and therefore they have a Spice of Profaneness, that they rather encourage Vice, by setting it off with a Lustre, than blacken it; and render Virtue rather Folly, than shew the Beauty of it; with much more to the

(g) An Act at Oxford, Preface page 5.

same Purpose. Another (g) denying that the Poets are guilty of the Corruption of Morals, and the Encouraging of Vice, according to the general Complaint against the Stage; yet he is so free as to own, that if in Strictness, this was true, it was enough to justify all the Severity of late express'd against it. As they know their Guilt, so their Perseverance therein is a Sign of the greater Obstinacy, and renders their Cause more inexcusable.

If any Reflection, which I have made seems too severe, I have this Apology; That if the Persons, whom I deal with, were concerned in a Religious Controversy, tho' I had differ'd from them in Opinion, yet I should have been obliged to treat them with all possible Tenderness. But as the blasphemous Language of the

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the Play-House raiseth the Blood at the Reading thereof, so it naturally produces more warm Reflections; and when there is not so much as a Pretence of Conscience, but the Design is to destroy all Religion whatsoever, in such a Case, an harsh Expression, or an harsher Punishment may be more easily excus'd.

I have in some Places been forced to produce the Quotations at Length, but there are many in the Margin of as gross a Nature; and tho' I thought my self oblig'd to mention some, which are fitter wholly to be buried in Oblivion, yet I hope that the Reader will think the Antidote to be as strong as the Poison which I have exposed. He therefore who would be a Judge in this Controversy, is desired to turn to the Pages of some Plays, where he may view the Hemlock in its own Soil, and be frequently convinced, that more might be added on this Occasion.

I have taken the best Care, which I could of the Quotations in the Margin, and hope that there are but few Mistakes, either of Page or Line. But if a Quotation should happen to be doubtful, the Reader is desired to view the Design of the Poet in the Lines before, and especially

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pecially after that which is quoted, by which Method he may be more fully convinced, that I have not misrepresented any of the Passages, and where the Quotations consist of many Lines, I have mentioned only that, which I have supposed to be the first or second for my Purpose. If I should mistake in reckoning the Lines of a Page, I suppose the Comparer will excuse such a Fault, if he finds the Quotation to be near the Line which I have mentioned.

The Plays generally consisting of two Names in the Front of the Title Page, I have made Choice of the first, except in that one, call'd Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, or Squire Trelooby. This the Reader is desired to observe, because there is one Play called The Faithful General, and another called The Loyal Subject, or The Faithful General; and therefore if the Reader should turn to the wrong Play, he may think that I am unjust to the Poets, when the Fault is his and not mine.

*I am not conscious that I have injur'd the Stage by any false Quotation, or such as will not prove, what they are quoted for. In this Case he who compares them may easily judge. I have left
out*

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out some which might have been added,
and others which would admit of some
slender Apologies, However, Passages
which are the least exceptionable, are
known and judg'd from their Confede-
rates, and the Design of the whole.
I think it needless to add more, since the
Tenth Part of what I have quoted, is
sufficient to prove, that our Poets are the
Bane of Religion, the Promoters of Vice,
and the Nuisance of the Nation.

THE

To the Reader.

As some editions which have been added
to this work, it is necessary to inform
the reader that the present edition is
entirely new, and that the former
one is now out of the world. The
author has been obliged to revise
the work, and to add many new
facts and observations. He has also
corrected many errors, and improved
the style. He trusts that the reader
will find it more interesting and
useful than the former edition.

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THE
EVIL and DANGER
OF
Stage-Plays :

CHAP. I.

The Obstinacy of the Stage.

THE *English Stage* taking a Liberty unknown in any *Heathen*, and notoriously *Scandalous* in a *Christian* Country, Mr. *Jeremy Collier* first began the *Attack* against them, in his Book, intituled, *A Short View of the English Stage*; wherein he fully convicted the *Poets* of *Immodesty* and *Profaneness*;

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faneness, Cursing, Swearing, Encouraging of Vice, Discouraging of Virtue, Abuse of the Holy Scriptures, with several other Notorious Crimes, destructive to Christianity, and tending to subvert the Principles of all Religion, and the Notions of Good and Evil. This Book met with a deserv'd Esteem from such who had a Zeal for God's Glory, and a Desire to suppress Vice, and promote Virtue. They had afterward a truer Sense of the Abominations of the Play-House, and did accordingly oppose, abhor and detest the same. When its Interest thus declin'd, it was expected that the Poets would have reform'd their Plays, and by this Method cut off all future Objections; but instead thereof, they only excuse themselves and their past Behaviour. Indeed Mr. Dryden, a Man of the greatest Parts and Wit among them, was sensible that their Cause was too bad to be defended, and therefore would not attempt an Impossibility; but Mr. Collier, equally exposing some Plays written by Mr. Congreve, and Mr. Dennis, and such as justly deserv'd the highest Censure, they were willing to wash the Black-Moor white, and endeavoured to vindicate

ate themselves and the *Play-House*. The weakness of their Arguments, occasioned by the Badness of their Cause, gave Mr. *Collier* an Opportunity not only for a farther Confutation, but also to shew the unfair Dealing of both these *Authors*, and to satisfy the World, that he undertook no more than what he was able to prove to the Shame of his *Adversaries*. Besides Mr. *Collier's* Endeavours, Sir *Richard Blackmoor*, and others, attempted also in Print to correct and reform the scandalous Abuses and Disorders of the Stage, and turn the Poetry of this Nation into another Channel; but all Efforts were found too unsuccessful. Instead of a Reformation, Satan muster'd up all his Posse; the Apprehension that his *Great Diana* was despis'd, and his *Temples* in Danger of being destroy'd, set his Engines at work to plead his Cause: And it is very observable, that as they wanted Arguments, so they endeavour'd to supply that Defect with Railing and Scurvility.

The Press being thus employ'd Pro and Con, had only this Effect, to satisfy a great Part of the Nation, where the Original of our *Atheism*, *Profane-*

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ness and *Debauchery* lay ; but it could produce no farther *Reformation*. Accordingly some Gentlemen in the City of *London*, who were *zealous* for the *Glory of God*, and the *suppressing* of *Immorality* and *Profaneness*, resolv'd upon another *Method*. In the Year 1699 they prosecuted several of the *Players* in the Court of *Common Pleas*, upon the *Statute* of 3 *Jac.* 1. for profanely using the *Name of God* upon the *Stage*, and obtain'd *Verdicts* against them. Afterward in *Easter Term* 1701, the *Players* belonging to the *House* in *Little Lincolns-Inn-Fields* were indicted at the *King's-Bench Bar*, before the *Right Honourable* the *Lord Chief Justice Holt*, for using several *scandalous Expressions*, to be seen in their *Plays* call'd, *Love for Love*, *The Provok'd Wife*, &c. at which Time several of the *Actors* were brought in *Guilty* by the *Jury*, without going from the *Bar*, the *Evidence* against them being so full and plain.

The Success of this Attempt was little more than that of the former. The *Players* had before found out a *Method* (as they thought) to avoid the *Penalty* of the *Law*, and yet retain the *Sins* ; which was by putting the Word *God* instead

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instead of *God*, and *Lard* instead of *Lord*, in a Profane and Contemptible Manner. If they must not swear *By the Name of God* (of which in the next Chapter) they will endeavour to make his *Name* ridiculous, and rather than avoid one *Sin* be guilty of another. However, this is now their constant *Method*, and thinking themselves secure, they retain all the *Swearing*, *Cursing*, *Blasphemy*, and *Profaneness* which they had before.

When these Endeavours were ineffectual, and they who aim'd at the *Glo-ry of God* had only this Satisfaction that they had discharg'd their *Duty*; the *Actors* little regarded the *Laws of Man*, and at the same Time loudly cry'd to *God* himself for Judgments in their *Plays* call'd, *The Tempest*, and *Mackbeth*, wherein they presume to imitate the *Almighty* in his wonderful Acts; wherein they ascribe the *Lightnings*, *Thunder*, *Storm* and *Tempest* to the Force of *Magical Arts*, that the *Hearers* might think them to be no Judgments from *God*: And thus they mock'd the *Great Governor* of the World, *who alone commands the winds and the seas, and they obey him*. However, *God* pleaded his own Cause,

and shew'd us that he would not be thus affronted, by sending a most dreadful Storm on the 26th Day of November 1703, which fill'd us with Horror and Amazement ; wherein he manifested his Anger and his Power, and made us sensible to our Sorrow, That *this was his hand, and he did it.* And yet so great was the *Profaneness* of the Stage under such signal Judgments, that we are told [a] *the Actors did in a few Days after, entertain again their Audience with these Ridiculous Plays; and that at the mention of the Chimneys [b] being blown down (Mackbeth, page 20.) the Audience were pleas'd to Clap at an unusual Length of Pleasure and Approbation; as if they were all agreed to outbrave the Judgment, throw Providence out of the Chair, and place the Devil in his stead: As if they would set God again at Defiance, and provoke him to vindicate his Honour, in sending a greater Calamity upon us.*

[a] ^{v. p. 9. m} A Representation of the Impiety and Immorality of the English Stage. Page 5.
[b] Mr. Collier's Diswaive from the Play-House. Page 15.

[*] *Dramatis Personæ in fine.*

To this I may add, That the Plays call'd, *The Tempest*, and *Mackbeth*, are now far outdone by a later which was printed in this Year, call'd, *The British Enchanters*; The Scene is [*] *England*, and consequently our Nation,

[c] represented as wholly addicted to Diabolical Practices. The Design is, I think, to recommend the Study of *Magick*, and he who can patiently see and hear the one, hath made a great Step toward the Practice of the other. Here we have [d] Enchantments with [e] Rods to make the better Jest of the [f] Sacred Story: And lest others should not know how to make a Compact with the Devil, and ruin their Souls to all Eternity, this [g] Blasphemous Sentence is spoken for their Imitation.

See it perform'd—And thou shalt be,
Dire Instrument of Hell, a God to me.

line 4. p. 4. in fine. p. 16. [e] Page 1. in fine. [f] Exod. 7. 11, 12. [g] Page 12. line 22.

Here we have Devils with [b] Instruments of Horror, some rising from under the Stage, others flying down from above; some [i] singing, and others [k] playing upon Musick; some [l] dancing and others [m] attending on their Enchanters; some [n] rang'd in order of Battle, and others [o] fighting in the Air. Here we have [p] Hell

[o] Page 33, 34. [p] Page 22. line 11. He who peruseth this Quotation, is desir'd to compare it with Prov. 21. 16. and Mr. Mede's Discourse upon it, page 31.

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represented as a Jest, with *Men and Women* chain'd in Rows, and [q] *Devils* for their Companions; nay, carrying a *Man* to the Place of *Torments*, with a *Flourish of Musick sounding Triumph*, in direct Opposition to (*) *the Joy of Angels* at a Sinner's Conversion. Here we have the dreadful Judgments of the *Almighty* mock'd, such as [r] *Thunder* and [s] *Lightning*, and also [t] *Raining of Fire from Heaven*, as *God* formerly over-
 [q] Page 20. line 10. threw *Sodom* and *Gomerrah*: And all
 (*) Luke 15. 10. this is perform'd in the *Play-House* lately built (as they tell us) for *Reformation*.
 [r] Page 1. line 5. and antepenult. p. 33. l. 19. [s] Page 16. line 19. p. 34. l. 8. [t] Page 33. line 38.

When the *Actors* imitated the *Tempest* in jest, we afterward felt it in earnest: I pray *God* to divert the same for the future, together with that more dismal Calamity, which they so loudly call for.

When *Her Majesty* was graciously pleas'd on that sad Occasion of the *Storm*, to appoint a Day of *Publick Fasting* and *Humiliation*, most of the *Bishops*, and *Clergy* of the City of *London* did then in their Sermons preach particularly against the *Notorious Profaneness* of the *Play-Houses*; and when they had thus discharg'd their Duty, they could not but hope, That the Attacking the *Stage* from the *Pulpit* as well

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well as from the *Press* (if it did not teach them *Religion*) would have taught them better *Manners*; but the Effect was only this, *These Watchmen have delivered their own souls.*

About this Time *Her Majesty* was pleas'd to send Her strict and solemn [u] Order, prohibiting, not only whatever was *offensive on the Stage*, but also all other Disorders and ill Customs; such as admitting *Vizard Masks*, and *Gentlemen's* going behind the *Scenes*, &c. which Order, according to *Royal Direction*, was read before the *Audience* (for they did not dare to do otherwise) and after that, both the Order and the Actor, who read it, were hiss'd off from the *Stage*. When I first read this, I must confess, I ceas'd to wonder that the lesser Efforts were insignificant, since they were grown to that Height of Impudence, as to insult even the *Royal Authority*, to dare *Her sacred Majesty*, to contemn Her pious Care, and so visibly to affront Her.

At the Time of the *Fast* abovementioned, there was printed a *small Treatise*, intitul'd, *A Representation of the Impiety and Immorality of the English Stage*, giving an Account of their Prosecution for *Profane, Lewd, and Atheistical*.

[u] A Letter in Answer to some Queries relating to the Stage, page 20.

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istical Expressions, and a Catalogue of several others spoken since, to shew that they continu'd as obstinate as ever: The Design hereof was to dissuade such as had any Sense of Religion from frequenting these Nurseries of Atheism and Licentiousness. Mr. Collier also printed A Dissuasive from the Play-House at the same Time.

These Methods made the Poets angry, but could not reform them. [x] They
 (x) Jer. 5. *have made their faces harder than a rock, and they have refused to return.* One
 3. Quotation out of the Play, call'd, *An Act at Oxford*, in the *Epistle Dedicatory*, pag. 8. may serve at present to shew their Spleen. Mr. Collier (saith the Author) *thought the Proclamation against Irreligion, and Her Majesty's Regulation of the Theatres imperfect as his Works (indeed he might think it insufficient when it was hiss'd off from the Stage) therefore on the Fast Day out comes his supplemental Pamphlet to rectify the Governments Omissions.—— Had he been content with the Countenance the World gave his View, and gone no farther, it might have pass'd for a Discourse wrote in the Cause of Religion; but his and his Associates Conduct since shews, there's another Cause on Foot. A pretty Turn!*

Her

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Her Majesty's Order is his'd at, Her pious Care contemn'd, and contrary to Her Intention, they go on in Sin the more securely; looking on it as a Disrespect to Her, for any other to assist Her in Her Pious Designs. This Author is pleas'd to look on it as an Affront to Her Majesty, to think Her Regulations not sufficient; and yet in the same Play he is guilty of [y] Swearing, Cursing, Exposing the Universities, and Societies for Reformation, the Aldermen (y) See the following Chapters in this Book. and Officers, Marriage and Religion it self, and pleads for Pimping and Whoring; and that Her Majesty may proceed no farther, he gives fair Warning (tho' in respectful Terms) that the Regulating of the Play-House may occasion a Rebellion.

However, the Attempts for a Reformation did not stop here; Her Majesty was afterward graciously pleas'd by Letters Patents, dated the 14th of December, Ann. 1705, to authorize John Vanbrugh and William Congreve Esqs; to inquire into the Plays, for the better Reforming the Abuses and Immorality of the Stage, and take care that nothing should be acted to the Prejudice of Religion and Good Manners, and consequently to be accountable for all future Misbehaviours.

After

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After all these Endeavours for a Reformation of the Play-House, by Her Gracious Majesty, the Judges, the Bishops, the Clergy and the Laity, from the Courts of Judicature, the Pulpit and the Press; it is Time to enquire, Whether the Effects have answer'd their Expectation? The Actors on, and Frequenters of the Stage, tell us, with a Confidence peculiar to themselves, That they are wonderfully Reform'd of late; and by this Pretence they think to impose on such as do not frequent them. But this is only a Sham to deceive the World.

For First, They cannot be reform'd of late, since they frequently act the old Plays, and even such as are most notoriously rampant and scandalous.

[z] 1 Cor. 5. 7. They ought to [z] purge out the old leaven, that they may be a new lump. When Mr. Power and his Company came to Bristol, he urg'd this Plea, That he would Act nothing, but what should be sober and modest, &c. and express'd a great Esteem which he had for Mr. Collier's Works, and Design to reform the Stage; and that he only selected the best Plays, and most inoffensive. This was a fine Pretence. But yet he acted near that City, on Monday July the

the 23^d, 1705, the Comedy, call'd, *Love for Love*; and on Monday the 13th of August following, he acted *The Provok'd Wife*, he himself (as I was inform'd) taking the Part of Sir *John Brute*, the *Provoking Husband*, which was the most scandalous, profane and atheistical Part of the whole Play; tho' it is remarkable that both these Plays have been evidently censur'd by Mr. Collier, both in his *Short View of the Stage*, and *Reply* in its Vindication, and the Players in *Little Lincolns-Inn-Fields* were found guilty in the *King's Bench*, and fin'd for the Acting of them.

Hence it appears that we cannot believe a Word which they say for themselves; the Examples of Justice will not cause them to beware: And as they are taught by the *Father of Lies*, so they are apt Scholars, for they scruple no such Sin to serve their Turn.

Secondly, They vindicate all their past Behaviour, and cry out publicly against a Reformation. When the Clergy upon the *Fast Day* preach'd against the Stage, there was also a Book printed, intitul'd, *Concio Laici*, or the *Lay Man's Sermon*; endeavouring to prove,
That

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That Hypocrisy, more than open Lewdness, is the crying Sin of this Nation, and brought that dreadful Storm upon us.

The Author complains, That the Clergy preach not against Hypocrisy (an impudent and false Assertion) and gives his Reason, [a] That tho' Hypocrisy is a Foe to Religion; yet the Author thinks he may confidently affirm, that it is a Friend to the Church: But then he gives this Caution, Remember I speak of no particular Church, but of every Church whatsoever. Like to this is that of [b] Mr. Dryden;

[b] Absalom
and Achitophel.

For Priests of all Religions are the same.

It is easy to prove, That in the Language of the Play-House, Hypocrisy now consists either in writing against the Stage, or putting the Laws in Execution against Immorality and Profaneness. It seems therefore (according to this Author's Opinion) that there was a Design of Reformation carry'd on, and this made God angry; but had we been profane, he had been better pleas'd. We had a Shew of Religion, and abhorr'd the Abominations of the Play-House, and this occasion'd such dreadful Judgments.

This

This was *horrid Language* as a Preparation for a *Fast*, and not to be parallel'd by *Jezebel* her self.

No *Clergy Mân* will vindicate *Hypocrisy*, and perhaps there are none who do not preach against it. But that such *Pamphlets* should appear at such a *Time*, is very surprising, and beyond the *Pagan Examples*. The Gilding over such *Notions* cannot hide the *Blasphemy*; since the true *English* thereof, is this: *If you endeavour to reform the Vices of the Age, you provoke God to be angry; but if you let Men alone to live as they list, it will divert the Judgment.* All *Religion* must down; since *Atheists* are fittest for these *Mens Purposes*. Good God! What a degenerate Age do we live in? Here are Men, who not only think wickedly, that God is such a one as themselves; but dare to publish their Thoughts, as a better Direction to observe the *Fast*. Accordingly the *Author* gives a Character of such, who put the *Laws in Execution* against *Prophaneness*, [c] that they are *Persons who are either* [c] *Page 25.* *vehement for Reforming all the World but themselves, and allow themselves in Diabolical Crimes, as Extortion, Fraud, Oppression, Malice and Slander, but are*
highly

highly offended at Human Vices, and Human Frailties in others: Or else, [d] are only offended at Vice in others, because they would erect a Monopoly for themselves. Here were fine Methods to turn all the Preaching on the Fast Day into Contempt, to affront the Queen who appointed the Fast to be observ'd because of the National Sins, and expose the Bishops who compil'd the Liturgy for, and preach'd on that Occasion.

The Stage being attack'd from the Press, and the Poets finding themselves unable publicly to vindicate their Cause, take another Method. In their Printed Plays they add Prefaces in Vindication of Plays in General, and frequently insert in their Acts some Speeches to this Purpose. This Method they conclude will Influence their Hearers, make them Proof against all other Arguments, and keep them firm to their Interest. This they cannot but think most effectual, because it is not probable, at least not fit, that the Plays should come into the Hands of any, but such as are delighted with them. This was their subtle Policy to maintain their Ground, in Hope of an Opportunity

unity to enlarge their Conquests. Beside these Scraps which we find in their Plays, there was one acted and printed wholly on this Subject, intitl'd, *The Stage Beaux toss'd in a Blanket, or Hypocrisy Alamode*. The Design of it was to expose Mr. Collier, and the Play it self is stuff'd with Scurrility, Lies, Swearing and Cursing, the common Garnish of our modern Poetry. I shall not at present trouble the Reader with any Quotations out of the Play it self, being all of a Piece: The Drama immediately before the first Act, hath shewn the Poet's fine Language, good Breeding and Manners, excellent Morality, and great Regard to the Ninth Commandment. In this Drama the Poet gives us this Character of Sir Jerry Witwood (and all the World knows whom he means) that he is a [e] Pert, Talkative, Half-witted Coxcomb, [f] vain of a very little Learning, always swims with the Stream of Popular Opinion, a great Censurer both of Men and Books, always positive, seldom or never in the right, a noisy Pretender to Virtue, and an impudent Pretender to Modesty, an Hypocrite, and false Zealot for Religion, and sets up for a Reformer of the Stage, of a sagacious Nose in finding

C

out

[e] Jude v.

9. 1 Pet. 2

23. Matth. 11.

29. Rom. 12.

21. Matth. 7.

3, 4, 5.

[f] Eph.

4. 25.

The Obstinacy of the Stage.

[g] *Matth.*
7. 1, 2.

out Smut or Obscenity; a wonderful Artist at extracting Profaneness out of all things that fall into his Hands; a profess'd Enemy of the Stage, tho' a Frequent of it; once thought a Divine, but for Reasons best known to himself, he hath cast off his Gown for the Vanities of a Beau Wigg and Sword; vain, proud, ill natur'd, and [g] incapable of Conversion. Let the Texts in the Margin shew how agreeable their Practice is to the Example of *Christ*, and the Rules of Christianity, and let the Reader guess at the same time, concerning the genteel Behaviour which they so much pretend to. However, this is the least. The Prologue exposes Religion in a Satyr pretended to be levell'd against the Dissenters; and the Epilogue is as bitter against the Societies for Reformation. As for Profaneness, this Play is like the Rest. To transcribe the whole would be horrid, and therefore let the Reader guess at it, from these two Lines in the Prologue.

*A Pox upon their Zeal to save our Souls;
They'd make us honest, that's they'd make
(us Fools.*

What

What *Language* can be more *Diabolical*? or with what Confidence can such pretend they are reform'd, when *Lucifer* could scarcely speak so daring? Here is dreadful *Cursing*, a *Satyr* upon *Zeal*, *Piety* and *Honesty*, to divert their *Hearers*, stifle their *Consciences*, destroy *Religion*, and teach the *Language* of *Hell*. This is contain'd in a short Rhyme to be remembred the better: And here we see the Effects of their pretended *Reformation*.

However, As the *Actors* were found guilty in *Westminster-Hall* of *profane Expressions*; so there is an Alteration in their *Plays*, tho' not for the better. They now set themselves in direct Opposition to *Justice*, a Crime which they dar'd not to be guilty of in former Ages. Accordingly in [b] their *Plays* they represent the *Magistrates* by [i] ridiculous Names, as such who live by *Extortion* and *Connivance*, expose them as guilty of [k] *Whoredom*, [l] as exposing themselves, and the rest of the *Bench*, (m) as talking *Smut*, and in love with young Girls, (n) as receiving of *Bribes* and, for the sake thereof, excusing gross Offenders, but severely punishing such as have nothing to pay. Thus they make

[b] The Humour of the Age. A Comedy. 1703.
[i] Dr ma.
[k] Page 6. line 22.
[l] Page 14. and 16.
(m) Page 15, and 43.
(n) Page 38. and 7.

(o) Page 7. the *Magistrates* the Jest of the Stage, and (o) send them away with a dishonourable *Exit*; and this they represent, as *The Humour of the Age*. This is a constant Affront, which they now put upon the *Judges, Aldermen, Juries, Informers*, and all such as endeavour to reform the *Corruptions* either of the *Nation* or the *Play-House*. Others are afraid of *Justice*, these bid it Defiance: Others pay a respect to *Magistrates*, these despise them: And certainly this is a great *Obligation* for the Future, as well as a *Reformation* from what is past.

However the Notion of a *Reformation* is something to amuse the World, and what they think will promote their Interest, and therefore they have of late pretended much thereto. The *Play-House* in the *Hay-Market* is said to be built only to reform the Stage, and what Effects Time will bring forth may be guess'd at from the *Prologue* spoken at its first Opening, which is notoriously *scandalous* and *profane* without Excuse. The (p) Builder is compar'd to God, and the Building to the Creation of the World.

(p) Line 1.

The Obstinacy of the Stage.

21

*Such was our Builder's Art, that soon as
(q) nam'd,
This Fabrick, like the Infant World, was
fram'd.*

(q) Gen. 1.
3, 6, 9, 11,
14, 15, 20,
24, 26, 29.

No Jest serves the Turn like a Droll
upon the *Scriptures*; since thereby they
are the less regarded at another Time.
Besides, it was the Ambition of the fall'n
Angels to affect a Likeness with God,
for which they were turn'd out of *Hea-*
ven; and yet (I think) the *Poet* exceeds
that in the following Lines.

*The Archilect must on dull Order wait;
But 'tis the Poet only can create.*

Had he said, *God and the Poet only
can create*, it had been more modest;
for then the *supream Being* had been
join'd as a Partner with the *Poets* Abi-
lities, whereas now he is totally exclu-
ded as dull and insignificant.

This *Horrid Blasphemy* is so rank, as
to raise the Blood at the Reading there-
of, and yet Mr. *Estcourt* inserts it, as
a choice Quotation, in the Title of his
Comedy, call'd *The Fair Example*.
However, to do this Gentleman Justice:
When he affected a greater than *Luci-*

The Obstinacy of the Stage.

ferian Pride, and attributed the Works of God to the *Poet*, and consequently to himself, he did well to omit his *Christian Name*, and write *Mr.*

Another thing remarkable in this
(r) Line 13. *Prologue* is the (r) reflecting on *Religion*, and consequently preferring the *Plays* before it.

*In the good Age of ghostly Ignorance,
How did Cathedrals rise, and Zeal ad-
(vance.*

The meaning is this. When the World was ignorant Men built *Churches*, and there paid their Devotion to God; but now they have more Knowledge, they build *Play-Houses*, and resort to their *Acts*. The Effects of Knowledge are better than the Effects of Ignorance.

(s) Line 19. (s) *For now that pious Pageantry's no more,
And Stages thrive as Churches did before.*

Besides, when they built *Churches*, it was a tedious, and (as we say) a *Church* work. *St. Paul's* hath been a great while in building, and is not yet finished, but the *Play-House* is quickly done.

(t)

(t) ————— soon as nam'd
 This Fabrick like the Infant World was (t) Line 1.
 fram'd.

And consequently there is another
 fly Infination, that as their Building
 went on faster ; so their Cause is better.
Religion is the great Enemy to the *Play-*
Houses, and therefore their utmost Ef-
 forts are to batter it down and destroy it.

In this *Prologue* the Women who
 frequent the *Play-House* are represented
 as *Goddeesses*, the *Lightning* of their
 Eyes is fiercer than that of *Jove* or *God*
 himself, and brighter than the *Sun*.
 Such Expressions, however gilded over,
 I take to be *Blasphemy*, and such as
 cannot be excus'd by any *Hyperbole* ;
 since what (u) *St. John* said of *Heav'n*, (u) *Rev. 21.*
God and Christ seems here to be applied, 23.
 to the *Play-House*, the *Women* and the
Actors.

The *Lion* is known by his *Paw*, and
 from this *Prologue* we may guess at the
 design'd *Reformation*.

However, since there is great Ex- (x) *Parturi-*
 pectation (x) from Mr. *Congreves* A- unt montes,
 bilities and his Care, I shall take Notice nascetur ridi-
 of the Improvement of the Stage since culus mus.
 his *Inspection*. Horat de Ar-
 te Poetica.

(v) Page 4. The First of these Reform'd Plays
 line 6. 16. was *The Gamester*, design'd to expose
 p. 23. l. an- this Vice, and consequently to aim at a
 re-penult. p. Reformation of Manners; at least to im-
 52. l. 27. p. pose upon the World, and make them
 55. l. 4. p. think so. In this Play the Devil is in-
 56. l. 1. p. vok'd in the first Line (a very good Be-
 57. l. 14. ginning) and in (y) seven other Places.
 (z) Page 4. There are several Instances of (z) pro-
 line 3. 22. fane Swearing, and (a) Cursing. The
 p. 7. l. 22. (b) fine *Angelica* is dress'd in Mens
 p. 33. l. 26. Cloaths, as a Jest upon *Deut.* 23. 5. and
 p. 45. l. 19, 32. p. 52. l. 12. *Valere* the Gamester, having (c) first pre-
 12, 14. p. tended a Reformation, and broken his
 63. l. 12. solemn Vows, is upon the (d) second
 p. 67. l. pe- Pretence, less solemn than the former
 nult. line 24. p. (only by the Poet suppos'd to be real)
 (a) Page 25. 29. l. 9. p. rewarded with this fine Lady and Ten
 31. l. 1, 32. Thousand Pounds, and makes an honou-
 p. 45. l. pe- rable Exit, without any Penance: He
 nult. p. 54. l. 30, 35. p. 68. loseth his Estate by Gaming, and repre-
 1. 17. p. 69. sented as the only Man of Figure and
 l. 7. Success. However, if we grant that
 (b) Page 53. Gaming is expos'd, yet the beforemen-
 (c) Page 24, tioned Vices are rather promoted.
 25, &c. (d) Page 62, and 66.
 In the Comedy call'd *The Quacks*, a
 (e) Page 26. *Smutty Epilogue* is forbid to be spoken,
 line 25, &c. however Care is taken to publish it from
 p. 29. l. 1, the Press; but yet there is a Tincture
 &c. of the (e) same Ingredient, and (f) a
 (f) Page 28. *Smutty*

Smutty Song, where the Force of the *Musick* doubles the *Mischief*. Hence our *Monthly Collections* supply the *Singing Masters* to teach the *Ladies* for their farther Improvement. The whole is a *Love Intreague*, and yet this *Play* is as inoffensive as any modern *Comedy*.

But that the World may better judge of these *Abominations*, I shall give some Account of these *Plays* which were printed in the Years 1704, and 1705 until the *Tenth Day* of *March* last ; and whenever I quote any other, I shall place in the Margin the Year in which it was printed. By this, I suppose, it will appear that the half of this *Wickedness* hath not been publicly *Discover'd* ; and tho' I do not pretend to cite all exceptionable Passages, yet I believe I shall produce sufficient to prove the *Stage* to be a *Sink of Sin*, a *Cage of Uncleanness*, and the Original Cause of all our *Profaneness* ; directly tending to root out all *Religion*, contemn the *Laws of God and Man*, and affront such as pay a *Regard* to either.

C H A P. II.

The Stage guilty of Swearing, and Blasphemy.

THat I may the better set forth our present *Stage* in its proper Colours, I look no farther back, than the two last Years; and shew how directly contrary the Practice thereof is to the Precepts, and Examples recorded in the *Holy Scriptures*; and the first Instances that I shall give are their *profane Swearing and Blasphemy*.

Profane Swearing is a Sin so directly forbidden by God that (a) the third Commandment seems chiefly levell'd against it; where we are told that God will not hold them guiltless, who shall offend in this particular. In the old Law, he who (b) swore ignorantly, or unawares was guilty, and (c) he also who heard it, and conceal'd the Crime. The Prophets look'd on this as one Cause of their Calamity. (d) Because of Swearing the Land did mourn, and (e) Zechariah saw a flying roll typifying the Curse of

(a) Exod. 20.
7. Dent. 5. 11.

(b) Levit. 5.
4.

(c) Levit 5.
1.

(d) Jer. 23.
10. Hos. 4.

2, 7.
(e) Zech. 5.
3.

of God, he was told that it should destroy every one who was guilty of Swearing. When our Blessed Saviour expounded the Law, he commanded us (f) not to swear at all; but let our (f) *Matth. 5.* Communication be yea, yea, and nay, nay, 34, 37. since whatsoever is more than these *ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ ἐστίν*, cometh from the Devil: and St. James above all things cautions us against it (g) lest we fall into condemnation. And to prevent any Freedom with such Expressions as have any resemblance of Oaths, (b) Our Saviour (b) *Mat. 12.* tells us, That of every idle word which 36, 37. men shall speak they shall give an account at the day of judgment. For by our words we shall be justified, and by our words we shall be condemned.

Blasphemy is also a Sin of that heinous Nature, that it is reckon'd to be the Crime, which the damn'd in Hell are guilty of, and which makes them incapable of Recovery. All other Sins are pardonable, but one Species of this Sin (i) will never be forgiven. It is positively forbidden in the (k) new Testament, as well as in the old, as (l) a Sin which defiles a man. It is a (m) Vice peculiar to the worst of Times, and (n) to the most notorious Sinners. It caus'd

(i) *Matth. 12.*
31. *Mark 3.*
28, 29, 30.
Luke 12. 10.
(k) *Colos. 3.*
8.
(l) *Mat. 15.*
19, 20. *Mark*
7. 21, 22, 23.
(m) *2 Tim.*
3. 1, 2.
(n) *Rev. 13.*
1, 6, 7.

(o) *Act*. 13. caus'd (o) the *Apostles* to depart from
 45, 46. *Act*. the *Jews*, and go to the *Gentiles*; and
 18. 6. God grant that it may not remove the
 (p) *Mai*. 52. Light of the *Gospel* from us, as it did
 5, 6, and 65. from them. It is a *Vice* which God
 7. *Ezek*. 35. (p) particularly resents, which (q) he
 12, 13, 14, 15. commanded should be punished with
Rev. 2. 9. (q) *Lev*. 24. Death; and accordingly a Capital Pu-
 16. (r) *Lev*. 24. nishment was constantly inflicted by the
 11, 12, 13, 14. *Jews* on such as were convicted either
 (s) 1 *King* 21. (r) truly, or (s) falsely of this Crime.
 10, 13. *Mat*. The Sins of *Swearing* and *Blasphemy*
 26. 65, 66. are contrary to the first Petition in
Matth 14. 63. the *Lord's Prayer*, wherein we daily pray
 64. *Act*s 6. 11, to God that his *Name* may be hallowed
 13. and 7. 57, or sanctified among us: They are con-
 58. trary to the *Creed*, since such who are
 guilty must either believe, that there is
 no God at all, or else that he is not *Al-*
mighty; but unable to inflict the Penal-
 ty, which he hath so solemnly denounc-
 ed against these Sins, in the third
Commandment.

In short, The *Name* of God is so sa-
 cred, that it ought not to be mention'd
 but with a suitable Reverence and De-
 votion. (t) *Jupiter*, the Heathen Deity,
 was represented as one who could not
 attend on Trifles; and we debase the
 Great Creator of Heav'n and Earth,
 when

(t) *Non vacat
 exiguis rebus a-
 desse Jovi Ovid.*

when he is (k) mention'd in the paltry Concerns of the Stage, especially in Comedies, where they make it their Business to render every thing ridiculous, and whence they banish whatsoever hath a Tendency to a grave or serious Thought; and therefore all such Expressions might properly be omitted by our Modern Poets; especially when they (l) place the *Gad* instead of *God*, and (m) *Lard* instead of *Lord*, in a foppish, drolling, fantastical, and ridiculous Manner, and in a (n) Dialect, toss'd in a Blanket. page 2. line 41. &c.

(k) The Careless Husband, Page 4. line 18, 25. p. 37. l. 19, 20. p. 55. l. 2, 3. The Confederacy, page 32. line ult. p. 61. l. 5. The Northern Lass, p. 17. l. 15. p. 19. l. 14. p. 22. l. 28. The Roving Husband reclaim'd, page 10. line 25. p. 11. l. 9. The Stage Beau

(l) The Careless Husband, page 14. line 3. The Female Witt, page 31. line 11, 14. p. 39. l. 24, 25. The Portsmouth Heiress, page 11. line 32. p. 55. l. 5. p. 66. l. 13. The Stage Beaux toss'd in a Blanket, page 39. line 8. *Ah Gad!* The Lawyers Fortune, page 64. line 12. *Be-fore Gad.* The Confederacy, page 17. line 13. *By Gad.* The Female VVitts, page 33. line 18. *Eh Ged!* (affectedly and ridiculously) The Stage Beaux toss'd in a Blanket, page 4. line 33, 41. p. 12. l. 16, 32. p. 14. l. 1. p. 43. l. penult. p. 44. l. 16. p. 51. l. 1, 16. p. 52. l. 12. p. 54. l. 14. p. 56. l. 9. p. 58. l. 19. p. 59. l. 5. *Gad forgive me.* The Confederacy, page 7. line 9. p. 46. l. 28. The Female Witts, page 34. line 8. The Stage Beaux toss'd in a Blanket, page 31. line 20. *O Gad.* The Female Witts, page 22 line 8. p. 32. l. 9. p. 50. l. 24.

(m) The Careless Husband, page 26. line 25. p. 50. l. ult. p. 51. l. 2. p. 56. l. 31. The The Confederacy, page 7. line 25. p. 24. l. 36. p. 65. l. 18. The Roving Husband reclaim'd, page 18. line 14. *Ed Lard!* (ridiculously) The Stage Beaux toss'd in a Blanket, page 13. line 22. *Good Lard!* The Confederacy, page 13. line 4. *O Lard!* The Confederacy, page 13. line 7. The Roving Husband reclaim'd, page 26. line 22. The Stage Beaux toss'd in a Blanket, page 45. line 19. *Oh Lerd!* The Stage Beaux toss'd in a Blanket, page 13. line 21.

(n) Lord Foppington's Discourse in The Relapse, printed 1698, and also in The Careless Husband, page 20. line 1. p. 28. l. 35, &c.

which

which the *Players* use, when they would have any Person or Saying appear contemptible. When they use the Name of *God*, they speak in such a Manner as to make it the Jest of the *Play-House*; but when they speak of the *Devil*, they speak with such an *Emphasis* as may command Respect and Attention: And thus whilst they falsely pretend, that they have avoided one Sin, they run into another, which hath a plainer Tendency to *Atheism*, and strikes more directly at the supreme Authority. As Fops, or Fools speak on other Occasions, so the *Players* always speak when they mention *The Great Creator of Heav'n and Earth*. Such Familiarity with his Transcendent Majesty, and at such a Time is too apt to breed a Contempt. The best which

(o) *Non titulum est ludere cum sacris.*

(p) *Dan. 4. 26. Luke 15. 21.*

(q) *Matth. 23. 22.*

can be made of it, is a (o) Jestings or Trifling with *Holy Things*, which was always reckon'd an unsafe, if not a vicious Practice. The Word *Heaven* is sometimes (p) us'd for *God* himself, whose Throne and chief Residence is there. Accordingly our *Blessed Saviour* tells us (q) *Whosoever sweareth by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and him that sitteth thereon.* For this

Reason

Reason I think it not fit to use the Word upon the Stage in (r) this Sense, and in trifling Matters, or that (s) an Actor should desire, for *Heavens sake*, that Care may be taken for the Committing Adultery in private. This is, in short, a Representing of God as delighting in Iniquity, and Men as wallowing in *Uncleanness* under Pretence of Religion; and if our *Blessed Saviour* may be believ'd in the Case of Oaths, the present (t) Actors are scandalously guilty; since *Swearing by Heaven* is their common Method.

(r) Solon, page 65. line 34. p. 63. l. 6. The Cares of Love, page 34. line penult. p. 41. l. 10. The Female Wits, page 20. line 8. p. 22. l. 16. p. 27. l. 25. p. 29 l. 4. p. 50. l. penult. p. 57. l. 18. The Portsmouth Heiress, page 57. line 1. (s) The Confederacy, page 28. line 33.

(t) Liberty Asserted, page 66, line 30. Love at first Sight, page 15. line 41. p. 55. Act 5. l. 24. p. 60. l. antepenult. p. 63. l. 28. Solon, page 54. line 15. p. 62. l. 27. The Cares of Love, page 17. line 20. p. 19. l. 14. p. 20. l. 13. p. 23. l. 31. p. 25. l. 34. The Conquest of Spain, page 3. line 5. p. 14. l. 11. p. 15. l. 27. p. 22. l. 33. p. 26. l. 32. p. 44. l. 15. p. 51. l. 31. p. 55. l. 4. p. 58. l. 5. The Faithful Bride of Granada, page 2. line 19. The Faithful General, page 28. line. 44. The Female Wits, page 2. line 15. p. 4. l. 19. p. 9. l. 16. p. 25. l. 5. p. 32. l. 3. p. 45. l. 3. p. 52. l. 17. p. 55. l. ult. The Loyal Subject, page 66. line 29, 35. The Mistake, page 41, line 8. The Portsmouth Heiress, page 28. line 20. p. 49. l. antepenult. The Rival Brothers, page 84. line 5. The Roving Husband reclaim'd, page 61. line 10. p. 62. l. 18. p. 63. l. 15. The Royal Merchant, page 44. line 38. p. 48. l. 21. p. 59. l. 18.

But if this was the only Practice of the present Stage, it might perhaps be something more tolerable. Alas! They take a far greater Liberty, and scruple

no

[u] The Northern Lass,
page 24. line 10.

[x] The Royal Merchant,
page 6, line 14.

[y] The Conquest of Spain
page 52. line 2.
The Rival Brothers, page 91. line ult.

[z] The Conquest of Spain
page 52. line 26.

[*] Liberty Asserted, page 25. line 20.

(||) The Faithful Bride of Granada,
page 29. line 18.

(a) The Metamorphosis,
page 51, line 5.

(b) the Biter,
page 14, line 5. p. 16. l. 22.
p. 23, l. 19.

(c) Squire Trelooby, page 11. line 11. The Roving Husband reclaim'd: page 11. line 9.

(d) By all that's good, By thy bright self I swear. The Conquest of Spain, page 52. line 2. By the Gods, By thee thy self the greatest Oath to Love. The Faithful General, page 71. line 36.

no Oath whatsoever. Sometimes they make a Jest of our solemn Manner in administering an Oath, by charging the Person sworn to *speake the Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth as God shall help him.* And as the serious Part is turn'd into Ridicule; so profane Oaths are to be found in every Play, and (I had almost said) in every Page. Sometimes they swear in Words at Length, [x] *By all that's Sacred*, and [y] *By all that's Good*, [z] *By the Eternal Truth*, or [*] *Mind*, (||) *By Heaven and Earth, and all that's Dear and Good*, (a) *By all the Powers that bear Oaths, and rain down Vengeance upon broken Faith*; (b) *By the solemn Powers*, and (c) *As they hope to be sav'd.* Sometimes they swear both (d) *By God and a Woman* present upon the Stage, as if they ador'd both alike, or rather look'd upon a Woman to be the only Good, and plac'd her above God himself.

It would puzzle any one at first View, to give a Reason why the Actors cry out

(e) O *Jebu* in their Comedies, since *Jebu* was a furious Man, and a Worshipper of the *Golden Calves*; but the Mystery is at an End when we consider, that it bears the greatest Resemblance to the sacred Name *Jehovah*, of any Word we find in Scripture, and therefore they think it the fittest to become the Jest of the Play-House.

(e) The Female Wits, page 50. line antepenult. p. 52. l. 9.

Our Blessed Saviour cautions us (f) that we should not swear by *Jerusalem*, because it is the city of the great king. For this Reason, I suppose, they swear (p) by *Jericho*, it being a Word likethe other in sound, and consequently reflecting on that Command, as much as they dare publickly to be guilty of it.

(f) Matth. 5. 35.
(g) The Biter, page 9. line 26. p. 11. l. 4. p. 22. l. 27. p. 24. l. 6.

Our Blessed Saviour also cautions us, that (h) we should not swear by our head, because we cannot make one hair white or black. How then can they excuse the profane Language of the Play-House where they commonly swear, by their (i) Blood, by their (k) Consci-

(h) Matth. 5. 36.
(i) Love the Leveller, page 31. line 20.
(k) Gibraltar, page 2. line 11. p. 16. l. 14. Squire Trelooby, page 39.

line 16. p. 55. l. 2. The Basset Table, page 6. line 2. p. 19. l. 4. p. 46. l. penult. The Careless Husband, page 13. line 7. p. 38. l. 33. The Confederacy, page 8. line 26. p. 28. l. 34. p. 35. l. 36. p. 71. l. 9. The Fair Example, page 4. line 32. p. 20. l. 30. p. 21. l. 12. p. 33. l. 19 and 21. The Female Wits, page 64. line 11. The Gamester, page 7. line 22. p. 54. l. 20. p. 67. l. penult. The Loyal Subject, page 14. line 36. p. 31. l. 40. p. 43. l. 5. p. 61. l. 12. The Lying Lover, page 62. line 9. The Mistake, page 6. line 27. p. 37. l. 26. The Northern Lass, page 18. line 34. p. 55. l. 20. p. 59. l. 18.

D ences,

(l) Love *ences*, by their (l) *Lives*, by their (m) the Leveller, *Souls*, or (n) *Bodies*?

page 1. line

11. p. 8. l. 6. p. 21. *At* 3. l. 5. p. 23. l. 20. p. 41. l. 24. The Bassett Table, page 14. line 22. The Loyal Subject, page 27. line 16. p. 29. l. 18. p. 42. l. penult. p. 58. l. 20. The Northern Lass, page 24. line 33. The Portsmouth Heiress, page 27. line 9. Ulysses, page 2. line 23.

(m) Love at first Sight, page 58. line 4 and 29. own'd to be an Oath l. 5. Perolla, and Izadora, page 51. line 19. Solon, page 16. line 25. The Careless Husband, page 5. line 33. p. 6. l. 40. p. 7. l. 3. p. 11. l. 14. p. 43. l. 25. p. 45. l. 10. The Female Wits, page 66 line 1. The Gamester, page 21. line 21. The Northern Lass, page 58. line 7. The Roving Husband Reclaim'd, page 59. line 20. The Royal Merchant, page 58. line 12. The Stage Coach, page 4 line 9. p. 5. l. 5, 25 and 28. p. 6. l. 1. p. 35. l. 1.

(n) The Metamorphosis, page 21. line 8.

But that the Reader may have a clearer Notion of their most horrid Language, it will be convenient to remember, that in most *Speeches* there are certain *Rhetorical Figures*, viz. *Apharesis*, when some Letters, or Syllables are taken away from the Beginning of a Word; *Paragoge* when they are added to the End of a Word; *Apocope* when they are taken from the End of a Word; *Ellipsis*, when some Words are left out; and *Metathesis*, when one Letter is plac'd instead of another. No one can be ignorant of this who hath read the *Latin* and *Greek Grammars*. Such *Figures* as these are also used in our *English Dialect*. When there

therefore we meet with such Words as in Proper Speech can signify nothing, we are forc'd to reduce them by some of these *Figures*, and then we shall know what the *Authors* aim at. To suppose our *Poets* (those great Masters of *Language*, *Wit* and *Eloquence*) should write *Nonsense*, is a Reflection upon them which they scorn. To suppose them ignorant of these *Figures* in *Rhetorick* is an undervaluing of their Learning: And therefore we must suppose them to be knowingly guilty, and take their Meaning, according as they sometimes explain themselves in other Places. The *Poets* mistrust that such *Hellish Language* in Words at length would not so well go down: And therefore, as *Traitors* formerly clip'd their counterfeit, as well as the real Coin; so do they clip their native *Language*, that the corrupt Part may pass insensibly, and do the greater Mischief. Under this Refuge they think themselves secure, altho' their Pretence is no more to the purpose, than if a *Roman Catholic* should affirm, that he exactly kept *Lent*, because the Meat was minc'd before he swallow'd it. If the bare Letters, and not the Sence did make an

(o) The Oath, then no Man could swear, except StageCoach, in one particular Language: Or if putting the Word *Lard* instead of *Lord* can page 7. line ting the Word *Lard* instead of *Lord* can penult. p. 14. alter the Nature of the Sin; they who l. antepenult. live in the *North* of *England* can never (p) An Act be guilty, since it is their common Way at Oxford, page of Speaking. So that notwithstanding 18. line 14. p. their frivolous Pretences, and subtle 29. l. 13. p. Evasions, wherewith they endeavour 34. Act 4. l. to excuse their Crimes, and gild over 15. Hampstead Heath, the Poison, the present *Actors* are horrid- page 20. l. 23. ly guilty of *Swearing* in a most scan- p. 32. l. ante- dalous Manner, beyond the Examples penult. p. 39. of former Ages; since all these Expres- l. 16. Love at first Sight, sions, viz. (o) *E-Cod*, (p) *E-gad*, page 6. line 3. (q) *'Gad*, (r) *'God*, (s) *I--Cod*, p. 12. l. 18. and 28. p. 23. p. 14. l. 23. l. 20. p. 50. l. 4. p. 53. l. penult. p. 55. Act 5, l. 6. p. 59. l. 4. and 13. p. 60. l. 32. p. 61. l. 8. p. 62. l. 6. p. 63. l. 2. p. 64. l. 3. 7. 23 and 22. p. 65. l. penult. p. 67. l. antepenult. Squire Trelooby, page 52. line 1. The Basket Table, page 40. line 12. p. 43. l. 7. p. 58. l. 4. 27 and 32. The Biter, page 15, line 19. The Female Wits, page 58, line 12. The Gamester, page 52, line 22. The Lawyers Fortune, page 38, line 7 and 12. The Roving Husband Reclaim'd, page 10. line 20 p. 53. l. ult. p. 56. l. 25. p. 64. l. 9. The Stage Coach, page 2. line 6. (q) Fortune in her Wits, page 12. line 1. p. 41. l. 22. Gibraltar, page 5. line 33. p. 20 l. 8. p. 22 l. 21 and 24. Sheet H. p. 43. l. 3. p. 57. l. 12. p. 59. l. penult. p. 64. l. ult. Epilogue the Second, l. 19. The Cares of Love, page 37. line 15. p. 48. l. 13. The Female Wits, page 3. line 21. The Roving Husband Reclaim'd, page 55. line 24. p. 65. l. 1. (r) Squire Trelooby, page 49. line 25. (s) Hampstead Heath, page 32. line 13. The Fair Example, page 32. line 2. The Mistake, page 55. line 26. p. 58. l. 15. The Roving Husband Reclaim'd, page 14. line 16. The Stage Coach, page 26. line 10.

[t] I--Gad,

[t] I-Gad, (u) 'Od, and [x] Y-God, are positive Oaths, by God himself, as they are used in the Play-House, by all sorts of Persons, and on all Occasions.

ample, page 37. line 3. The Female Wits, page 36. line 27. The Mistake, page 27. line 18. p. 28. l. 10. p. 35. l. 1. p. 53. l. 13.

(u) The Biter, page 16. line 25, 33 and 34. p. 17. l. 7. p. 21. l. 19. p. 23, l. 16. p. 25. l. 21. p. 53. l. 33.

(x) The Amorous Miller, page 39. line 12.

And as they deal thus with the Name of God; so they make as bold with Christ Jesus, our blessed Saviour and Redeemer. In this Respect they may be said (y) to crucify to themselves the son of God afresh, and put him to open shame. These are the Men who by their Words declare, that [z] they esteem the blood of the covenant whereby they are sanctified, as a profane thing, whilst they thus do despight unto the spirit of grace. What other meaning can be put upon their frequent and horrid Oaths, by the [†] Body, by the (a) Blood, by the (b) Death, (c) the Life, (d) the Heart, and (e) Wounds of God?

21. line 22. 'Ad's bud. The Baller Table, page 52. line 18. 'Od's bud. The Lawyers Fortune, page 8. line 25. 'S bud or 'Z bud. Gibraltar, Sheet F page 44. line 34. Love the Leveller, page 54. line 6. The Fair Ex-

(t) Gibraltar, page 43. line ult. p. 59. l. 5. Love the Leveller, page 54. line 6. The Fair Ex-

(y) Heb. 6.

(z) Heb. 10.

(†) 'Od's Bodykins. As you find it, printed 1703, page 16. line antepenult.

Bodykins. Love at first Sight, page 25. line 20. p. 26. l. 16, and 40.

(a) God's bud. Gibraltar, Sheet F page 44, line 9. 'D's blood. An Act at Oxford, page 16. line 12.

'S blood. Squire Trelooby, page 52. line 18.

'S bud or 'Z bud. Gibraltar, Sheet F page 44. line 34. Love the Leveller, page 54. line 6.

56. line penult. The Amorous Miser, page 1. line 9 and 12. p. 2. l. 11, 25 and 32. p. 3. l. 16. p. 4. l. 4, 13 and 24. p. 5. l. 27. p. 6. l. 22. p. 7. l. 24. p. 9. l. 15 and 22. p. 10. l. 20 and 24. p. 23. l. 10, 22, 25 and 27. p. 34. l. 23 and 29. p. 35. l. 12. p. 36. l. 22. p. 37. l. 1. p. 38. l. 23 and 25. p. 39. l. 16. p. 40. l. 28. p. 42. l. 15 and 17. p. 43. l. 16. p. 45. l. antepenult. p. 47. l. 6. p. 49. l. 16, 27 twice, and l. 29. p. 50. l. 7. p. 51. l. 8. p. 52. l. 2 and 30. p. 53. l. 15. p. 58. l. 12 and 19. p. 59. l. 10 and 22. Forty seven times in this one Comedy.

The Fair Example, page 32. line 3. p. 34. l. 5. p. 38. l. 10.

(b) 'Ud's Death. The Mistake, page 48. line 19. 'D's Death. Hampstead Heath, page 18. line 26. The Basset Table, page 10. line 12. 's Death. Love at first Sight, Epilogue, line 5. page 39. line 7. p. 43. l. 21 and 32. p. 47. l. 1 and antepenult. p. 50. l. 15. p. 56. l. penult. p. 63. l. 21. 30 and ult. p. 65. l. 24. p. 67. l. 22. Love the Leveller, page 22. line 12. Solon, page 49. line 12. p. 67. l. 19. The Amorous Miser, page 13. line 19. p. 14. l. 23. The Biter, page 4. line 4. The Cares of Love, page 43. line 25. p. 48. l. 27. The Confederacy, page 14. line 9. p. 33. l. 3. The Lawyers Fortune, page 8. line 20. The Portsmouth Heiress, page 31. line 4. p. 47. l. 10 and 28. p. 52. l. 1. p. 54. l. 12. The Temple of Love, Epilogue, line 3. Death! Gibraltar, Sheet E page 33. line 20. Sheet F p. 45. l. 26. p. 52. line 14. p. 54. l. 35. p. 55. l. 17 and penult. p. 60. l. 27. Love at first Sight, page 57. line 30. The Amorous Miser, page 11. line 3. The Basset Table, page 39. line 31. The Careless Husband, page 4. line 1. p. 6. l. 10. p. 17. l. 37. p. 18. l. 39. p. 28. l. 12 and 41. p. 47. l. ult. p. 55. l. 7. p. 62. l. 30. p. 64. l. 3. The Conquest of Spain, page 60. line 26. The Gamester, page 4. line 21. p. 45. l. 32. p. 55. l. 14. The Quacks, page 23. line 21. The Roving Husband reclaim'd, page 39. line 22.

(c) 'Od's Life. Loves Contrivance, (printed 1703) page 23, line 5. p. 60, l. 29. 'Ud's Life. The Mistake, page 3, line ult.

's Life. Gibraltar, Sheet F page 44, line 18. p. 56, l. 17. The Amorous Miser, page 39, line 1. The Portsmouth Heiress, page 36, line 13. p. 63, l. 7, 11 and 13. 'Life. Gibraltar, Sheet F page 43. line 1.

(d) 's Heart. Love at first Sight, page 25, line 17. p. 28, l. 24. 30 and 36. p. 30, l. 9. p. 38, l. 9. p. 41, l. 3 and 31. p. 42, l. 4, 10 and penult. p. 47, l. 5, 9 and 32. p. 48, l. 7 and 22. p. 52, l. 11 and 14. p. 53, l. 24 and 31. p. 54, l. 18, 21 and penult. p. 60, l. 17, 21 and 26. p. 61, l. 3. p. 62, l. 12. p. 63, l. 3, 9, 12 and 37. p. 64, l. 11 and 18. p. 65, l. 9 and 29. p. 67, l. 3, 7, 16, 25 and 32.

'Ad's Heart.

Ad's Hearlikins. Love at first Sight, page 42, line 16. The Amorous Miser, page 25, line 21.

(e) *'Zounds.* An Act at Oxford, page 19, line 11. The Basset Table, page 53, line penult. *'Zoons.* Gibraltar, Shear F Page 48, line 16. Epilogue the second, Verse 10. Love at first Sight, page 66, line 24. The Gages of Love, page 37, line 3, 29. *'Zauns.* Love at first Sight, page 58, line 3, owned to be an Oath, l 5. p 59, l 17. *Ounds.* The Amorous Miser, page 10, line 8. p 35, l 15 and 20. p 36, l 24. p 42, l 6. p 43, l 15 and 23. The Basset Table, page 53, line 32. The Female Wits, page 21, line 11. *'Ouns.* The Female Wits, page 39, line 26. p 51, l antepenult. p 65, l 17. *'Oons.* The Confederacy, page 13, line 19. p 29, l antepenult. p 32, l 3 and antepenult. p 52, l 1. p 69, l 18. The Fair Example, page 37, line 19. The Mistake, page 19, line 22.

However, whilst the *Actors* take this Method to avoid the Penalty of the Law, and yet retain the *Sins* against God, in Despight of all the Attempts for their *Reformation*; and whilst they thus profanely swear, by the death of *Christ*, and his *Blood*, which was shed for the Redemption of fallen Man, it might be expected, that they would join it with some Expressions of Respect and Esteem: But instead thereof they join it with Words of Contempt and Reproach, as if they look'd upon that stupendous Miracle of Mercy, to be the greatest Calamity that could befall the World. What other Meaning can there be of such Expressions as these? [f]

Blood and Death, and Fire! [g] *Blood and Thunder!* [b] *'s Death and Amazement!*

D 4

[i] *Death*

[f] The Gamester, page 52, line 14.

[g] The Confederacy, page 13, line 8. p 67, l 22. p 50, l 30, owned to be an Oath *ibid.* l 31.

The Fair Example, page 34, line 18.

[h] The Portsmouth Heiress, page 38, line 1.

[i] The Fair Example, page 42, line 18. p 59, l 31. and that which is yet more monstrously The Mistake, page 58, line 1. [k] The Roving Husband Reclaim'd, page 41 line 7. [i] *Death and Confusion!* [k] *Death and Destruction!* [l] *Torture and Death!* [m] 'D's *Death and Furies!* [n] *Death and Furies!* [o] *Death and Hell!* [p] *Death, Hell and Furies!* [q] *Death and the Devil!*

[l] The Portsmouth Heiress, page 45, line 26.

[m] An Act at Oxford, page 36, line penult.

[n] The Confederacy, page 13, line 15. p 45, l 7. p 33, l 7. owned to be an Oath *ibid.* l 8.

[o] Gibraltar, page 54, line 27.

[p] The British Enchanters, page 29, Act 4, line 4. The Faithful General, page 53, line 7.

[q] Gibraltar, page 49, line 9. p 58, l 19. The Confederacy, page 29, line ult. p 50. l 25, owned to be an Oath, *ibid.* l 26.

The bare Repetition of such unparallel'd *Blasphemy*, will make the Flesh tremble, and the Blood grow cold. A just Reflection hereon cannot be express'd in Words, and therefore I must leave the Reader, to make it himself, and then to apply the Expostulation of

(r) 2 Cor. St. Paul, (r) *What concord hath Christ with Belial? Wherefore come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.*

To these Horrid Oaths, may several Instances be added from our present Plays, besides those already mentioned in

The

of Swearing and Blasphemy.

41

The British Enchanters, where (s) the Devils appear on the Stage, and (t) are oftentimes made a Jest for the Hearers, as if they believed no such thing in earnest, and sometimes the Adoration due to God alone is paid to them. This is certainly the highest Blasphemy that Mortals can invent, 'tis enough to make the Hair stand upright, and it might be thought that none but Persons given over to a Reprobate Sense can take Pleasure in such Diversions.

(s) Solon, page 30, line antepanult.

The Roving Husband Re-claim'd, page 58, line 20.

(t) Fortune in her Wits, page 27, line 31. Gibraltar, Sheet F page 44, line 30 and 36.

The Roving Husband Re-claim'd, page 8, line 21.

The Devil a Wit (i. e. No Wit) The Northern Lass, Prologue, line 3.
The Devil a one (i. e. No one) The Portsmouth Heiress, page 54, line 4.
The Devil a Thing (i. e. Not any Thing) The Stage Coach, page 32, line 3.

I cannot but observe that these Representations (tho' the Diversion of the English Stage) were accounted scandalous in foreign Countries, and accordingly the Use of Vizards representing Devils were prohibited by Canons made for this Purpose, (u) one threatening Excommunication for the Offence, and (x) another telling us that this Practice

(u) Synodus Lingonensis, An. 1404. Summo- perè caveant ne interficiant, neque ludant in Ludo, quo utuntur Larvis in figurâ Dæmonum, & horrenda ibidem committuntur; quem Ludum,

non solum Clericis, sed generaliter omnibus subditis prohibemus sub Excommunicationis pænâ, & decem Librarum nobis applicandum.

(x) Concilium Nanatense, Anns 890. Nullus Presbyterorum Larvas Dæmonum ante se fieri consentiat: quia hoc Diabolicum est, & sacris Canonibus prohibetur.

is

The Stage Guilty

is *Diabolical, and forbidden in the Holy Scriptures*; but in our new *Theatre*, there are such things publickly acted, which those who lived under *Popish Superstition*, and in the grossest *Times of Ignorance* were asham'd of, and judg'd to be utterly unlawful.

But to instance in Particulars.

- First*, To (b) own the *Devil* as a *God*, or make a Compact with him for the gratifying of our *Revenge*, is a *Sin* so positively forbidden in the *first Commandment*, and (c) other *Texts of Scripture*, as will admit of no *Evasions*. To call him a *more than mortal Power*, and infer from thence, that it is a *Frenzy* to resist him and his *Agents*, is also as dreadful: and yet this is the *Blasphemous Language* of the *Stage*, and such a *Comment* upon *St. James* as is not to be met with, except in the *Play-House* lately built for *Reformation*.

Secondly, We are commanded in weighty Matters, and for the *Deciding of Controversies*, to (f) *swear by the Name of God, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness*. This is a solemn *Calling* of him to be a *Witness* of what we say; it is an *Acknowledgment*

(b) The British Enchanters, page 12, line 22.

(c) 1 Sam. 28. 7, 11, compared with 1 Chron. 10. 13, 14.

(d) The British Enchanters, page 16, line 2.

(e) James 4. 7.

(f) Deut. 10. 20. Jer. 4. 2. Hebrews 6. 16.

ment that he searcheth the Hearts, and will render Vengeance on that Man, who swears falsely, and consequently is an Act of Worship due to God alone; but this in the Play-House is paid to the Devil. Thus (g) in the Play call'd Solon, the Scene is Hell, and Pluto swears at large,

By the Horrors of the Deep,
By Chaos, Darkness, Night and Sleep,
By all the Torments here below,
By all the fiery Streams that flow.

Thus they frequently swear, by (b) The Hell, by (i) the Furies, and (k) the Devil; as if that was true of them, which the Prophet Isaiah speaks. (l) We have made a covenant with death, and with hell we are at agreement, for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid our selves.

(b) The Gamester, page 45, line ult. The Lawyers Fortune, page 30, line 1. Zelmane, page 34, line 14.

(i) The Faithful Bride of Granada, page 43, line 3. The Gamester, page 55, line 4. p 56, l 1.

(k) An Act at Oxford, page 26, line 16. The Gamester, page 55, line 9.

(l) Isaiah 28. 15.

Thirdly, We are commanded in Scripture, to (m) call upon the name of the Lord

(m) Genes. 12. 8. Psal. 20. 5. Acts 22. 16.

(n) *Alts* Lord, and (n) all *Adjurations* are made
 3. 6. and 16. in the Name of God, or of Christ; but
 18. and 19. in the Play-House they adjure, in the
 13.

(o) Squire Name of the (o) Devil, (p) Lucifer
 Trelooby, and (q) Satan.

page 22. line

8. p 38, l 23. The Confederacy, page 51, line 12. The
 Fair Example, page 3, line 1. p 6, l 16. The Stage Coach,
 page 31, line 7.

(p) The Confederacy, page 38, line 32.

(q) The Amorous Miser, page 48, line 1.

(r) Love Fourthly, All Ejaculations in Scrip-
 at first Sight, ture are spoken in the Name of God;
 page 15, line but in the Play-House they are spoken
 antepenult. in the Name of the Devil. Thus
 p 17, l 25.

(s) An Act Psal. 15. 1. Lord! who shall abide?
 at Oxford, &c. but the Play-House Language is,
 page 18, line who the Devil? &c. Indeed some-
 10. p 35, l

1. Gibralt- times they use (r) the Name of God,
 tar, Sheet F on such Occasions (tho I wish they
 page 41, line did not) but generally the Devil is
 13. Sheet F

p 44, l 23. set in God's Place: And as the Church
 Sheet F p 46, of Rome have Ten Ave Marias for One
 l 12. Sheet G Pater Noster; so the Respect of (s)
 p 56, l 32.

Sheet Hp 49, this Kind, which they pay to the De-
 l 5. Sheet H vil, is Ten Times as much as that
 p 53, l 9. p which they pay to God. Good Lord,
 62, l 17.

Hampstead deliver us from such Synagogues of
 Heath, page Satan, and from such Men who are
 39, line 20. thus publickly devoted to his Service.

Love at first Sight, page 48, line 21, Love the Leveller, page 6, line 18.

Squire

Squire Trelooby, page 21, line 5. p 39, l 28. The Amorous Miser, page 51, line 7. The Bassett Table, page 2, line 8 and 15. p. 21, l 1, 23 and 33. p 31, l 15 and antepenult. p 40, l 2. The Biter, page 1, line 11. p 2, l 29. p 52, l 5. The British Enchanters, page 12, line 1. The Careless Husband, page 19, line 36. p 23, l 22. The Cares of Love, page 37, line 7. p 39, l 4. p 47, l 5. p 48, l 30. The Confederacy, page 17, line 11. p 22, l 26. p 31, Act 3, l 1. The Fair Example, page 63, line 9. The Female Wits, page 22, line 18. p 29, l 10. p 63, l 16. p 64, l penult. The Gamester, page 1, line 1. p 4, l 5 and 15. p 23, l antepenult. p 57, l 14. The Loyal Subject, page 21, line 17. The Metamorphosis, page 32, line 14. p 41, l 19. The Mistake, page 8, line 15. p. 28, l 16. p 32, l ult. The Northern Lass, page 69, line 34. The Roving Husband Reclaim'd, page 9, line 21. The Stage Coach, page 25, line 4. p 28, l 14. p 29, l 1. The Tender Husband, page 60 twice, in line 27 and 28. Ulysses, Epilogue, line 33.

Lastly, Prayers to, and Praises of an Invisible Being as present, are Acts of *Divine Worship*, and due to God alone; and if we believe the *Scriptures*, ought to be given to none other. When the *Devil* tempted our *Saviour* to worship him, his Suggestions were repell'd by saying (t) *It is written*. (t) *Matth. thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve.* 4. 10. The Good Angel also refus'd the same, and gave this Reason (u) *We must worship God.* (u) *Rev.* But both these Acts of Adoration are 22. 9. paid to the *Devil* in the *Play-House*. (x) *Gibral-* They sometimes droll out the Name tar, page 5. of (x) *the Lord*, to render it despise- line 1. able, and invoke the Assistance of (y) *Gib-* his *sacred Majesty* in (y) *a drunken,* raltar, *ibid.* or

[z] Gib- or [z] a *Whoring Intreague*, or upon
 raltar, page 22, line 19. [a] *ridiculous Occasions*; but they use
 the grand Rebel against *Heav'n* at a-
 [s] Squire nother Rate, they [b] pray to him
 Trelooby, to *aid their just designs*, they own him
 page 20, line 1 and antepe- as [c] *more than a mortal Power*, nay
 nult. p 21, [d] as a *God*, and pronounce his Name
 1 10. The with an *Emphasis*, as if it was more
 Lawyers remarkable. When any Person is
 Fortune, mention'd in *Scripture* as of Extraor-
 page 8, line 29. dinary Abilities, the usual Expression
 [b] The is, that [e] *God is with him*, or [f]
 British En- in him; but in the *Play-House Language*
 chanters, [g] *He is the Devil*, or [h] *the Devil*
 page 30, line 30. is in him: And when any Person is
 [c] The over-rul'd by some unexpected *Provi-*
 British En- dence, presently [i] *the Devil is in it*,
 chanters, and the Glory given to him alone.
 page 16, line 2.

[d] The
 British Enchanters, page 12, line 22.

[e] *Jobn* 3. 2.

[f] *1 Cor.* 14, 25.

[g] The *Gamster*, page 6, line 22.

[h] The *Biter*, page 3, line 7.

[i] The *Basset Table*, page 27, line 14. The *Biter*, page
 61, line 16. The *Carcle's Husband*, page 17, line 32. p 20,
 1 17.

(k) *Mat.* When the *Pharisees* attributed our
 12. 31, 32. *Saviour's Miracles* to the Power of
Mark 3. 22 the Devil, he said that (k) they were
 13 30. *Luk.* guilty of the Sin against the *Holy Ghost*,
 12. 10. and

and that this Sin alone should never be forgiven: Now how near the ascribing the works of God's Providence to the Devil in this Age, comes up to the unpardonable Sin of the Pharisees, they who are guilty ought seriously to consider; for it is no jesting Matter.

I am sensible that the Reader may think, I wrong the *Players* in affirming, that in a *Christian Nation*, and before an Assembly of People, such Persons, who in their *Baptismal Vow* have promised to renounce the Devil and all his works, shall dare to pray or sing Praises to him; and therefore I am forc'd to produce some Quotations to this purpose. I shall make no Comment on the *Monsters*; but let others judge whether I misrepresent them or not.

Arfinoe, page 22. line 2.

*Assist, ye Furies, from the Deep,
Revenge, Revenge prepare.*

*The British Enchanters, page 30.
line 30.*

Furies, Alecto, aid my just Design.

The

The Metamorphosis, page 14.

Hail, Pow'rs beneath, whose Influence
 [imparts]
 The Knowledge of Infernal Arts;
 By whose unerring Gifts we move
 To alter the Decrees above;
 Whether on Earth, or Seas, or Air,
 The mighty Miracle we dare.

(1) The Monthly Collection of Vocal Musick, for October, 1704. It is Pity to see so noble a Science, as Musick thus debas'd. However, the Devil must own himself particularly oblig'd to Mr. Eccles for this Signal Service in (1) composing the Notes on this Occasion, with an Air so like to a Supplicatory Anthem.

[m] Love the Leveller, page 35. The Temple of Love, Act 1. Scene 1. The Players treating the Devil in such a manner; the Respects which they pay to Pagan Deities, will the less be wonder'd at. Accordingly, here we [m] have Temples in their Honour, [n] Oracles given which are fulfill'd, tho' strange and mysterious, and Acts of Divine Worship paid to them. In one [o] Play, Bacchus is own'd as a God; in [p] another, as the Jolly God of Pleasures; and accordingly, he is ador'd and invok'd with crowning the Goblet, and Pagan Superstitions. In one

[n] The Temple of Love, page 30, and 34. [o] The Amorous Miser, page 40. line 1.

[p] Ulysses, page 6. line 21.

one (q) *Play*, after a Clap of Thunder, the Scene opens above, and discovers *Pallas* in the Clouds; the *Actors* all kneel, and one after another put up their several Petitions; nay they are exhorted so to do in this Expression,

(q) *Ulysses*, page 35, line 5.

*She shakes her dreadful Ægis from the Clouds,
Bend, bend to Earth, and own the present Deity.*

In another (r) *Play* is represented a magnificent *Temple*, in the midst, an Image of *Jupiter* in Gold, arm'd with *Thunderbolts*, standing upon a large *Pedestal*; an *Altar* flaming with *Sacrifice*, several Persons kneeling before it, the *Priests* waiting round it, crown'd with Gold; *Choristers* on each side, in *White*, and in *Rows*, with soft *Musick*, and an *Hymn* beginning with these Words.

(r) *The Faithful General*, Page 25, Act 3.

*O King of Gods! Immortal Jove! To thee
Our grateful Incense, and our Hymns we
raise.*

In the Primitive Times there were many Thousand *Christians* put to Death,
E which

The Stage Guilty

(s) Spencer
de ritualibus
Judæorum,
per totum.

which they chose rather than they would offer *Incense* to the *Pagan Gods*; but their Examples are out of Mind, and we commit the *Sin* without any Scruple. Now he who considers (s) the great Care of *God* to forbid the *Jews* every Thing, which had a Tendency to *Idolatry* or *Pagan Superstition*, may wonder to see their *Temples*, their *Priests*, their *Altars* and their *Devotions* thus represented on the *Christian Stage*; and tho', blessed be *God*, there is not the Danger of *Paganism*, yet *Atheism* may be the Consequence thereof. For when Men see these *Idols* worshipped with the same Devotion as is given to the true *God*, they are apt to think that all *Religions* are alike, and that it is not the Excellency of any, but only the Education or Fashion of the Country, which make us differ in these Particulars.

(t) *Exod.* The *Scriptures* enjoin us for this Reason (t) to make no mention of the Names of other *Gods*, neither to let them be heard out of our mouths: They forbid us (u) to swear by them, to serve them, and to bow our selves down unto them, because such things will

23. 13. *Dent.*
12. 3. *Judg.*
2. 2. *Psal.*
16. 4. *Isaiah*
44. 9 to 21.
Hos. 2. 17.
Zeck. 13. 2.
(u) *Jos.*
23. 7.

of Swearing and Blasphemy.

51

be (x) a snare unto us. Besides, God (x) Exod. tells us (y) that he is the Lord, that is 23. 33. and his name, and he will not give his glory 34. 12. Deut. to another, nor his praise to graven ima- 7. 16. ges. Nay, Origen (z) assures us, That (y) Isaiah the Christians in his Time contended even 42. 8. to Death, rather than they would call (z) Contra Jupiter a God; and behaved themselves [a] Arsinoe, with that Reverence and Piety towards page 38, line antepenult. God, that they would not attribute to [b] Arsinoe, him any of those Names which the Poets page 47, line 16. Fortune gave to any of their imagined Deities. in her Wits, But our present Actors far outdo the page 22, line 26. utmost of Pagan Superstition in this Particular: Here the Fates are repre- [c] Perolla and Izadora, sented as [a] appointing our Deaths. page 47, line 6. Here the Pagan Gods and Goddesses are represented as [b] immortal, as [c] [d] Perolla and Izadora, bounteous, as [d] indulgent, as [e] just, page 26, line 29. may [f] all just, as [g] knowing, and [b] wise, as [i] celestial Pow'rs, and [e] The Guardians of the Just, as [k] the great- British En- and lesser Pow'rs that rule in Heav'n chanters, and Earth, as [l] such who bear Pray'rs page 30, line 33.

[f] Perolla

and Izadora, page 59, line 1.

[g] Perolla and Izadora, page 18, line 9.

[h] Solon, page 12. line penult.

[i] Ulysses, page 63, line 10.

[k] Ulysses, page 28, line 24.

[l] Solon, page 71, line 33. Zelmane, page 13, line 5.

E 2

and

[m] Solon, *and give Victory*, as [m] *such whose Power is boundless, and Wisdom infinite*, as
 page 51, line 26.

[n] Perolla [n] *such who in pity of our Infirmities and Izadora, afford us providential Means, and [o] as Witnesses of our Devotion.* Here we
 page 28, line 6.

[o] Perolla have Cupid represented as a [p] God, and Izadora, as [q] Almighty, and [r] as a powerful
 page 29, line 27.

[p] Arsinoe, *Learned and the Brave, and frustrated their Resolutions.* This is the Actor's
 page 16, line 12 and 20.

[q] The represent (s) Cupid as the God of resist-
 Roving Husband Re- less Fire, who oft in Female Hearts with-
 band Re- triumph sees the unlook'd for Changes of
 claim'd, page 29, line 10.

[r] The of Heav'n and Earth, Delight of Gods
 Cares of above, to whom all Nature owes her
 Love, page 19, line 18.

(s) Perolla withstand, but he rules from the Skies
 and Izadora, to the Center. They represent Mars
 page 27, line 31.

(t) The chiefly owe our Preservation. They re-
 British En- present Nemesis as (y) just, and one
 chanters, who knows the Crimes and Injuries of o-
 page 16, line 31.

(u) The reversing the Sentences passed upon Men
 British En-
 chanters, page 19, line antepenult.

(x) Fortune in her Wits, page 17, line 6.

(y) Ulysses, page 3, line 9.

(z) Solon, page 30, line penult.

The

They represent *Jove* as (a) *Almighty*, (a) *Solon*,
as (b) *an Avenger*, (c) as the *Creator* page 12, line
of the *World*, as (d) *Eternal*, (e) *Im-* 16. The Faith-
mortal, (f) *Imperial*, and *King of the* page 26, line
Gods, (g) *in Grandeur above*, (h) *Just*, 13.
(i) *one who knows the Crimes and Inju-* (b) *Ulysses*,
ries of others, (k) *Supream*, (l) *the* page 30, line 3.
Thunderer, (m) *Vindictive*, and (n) *one* (c) The
who scourgeth the Flagitious World, and Faithful Gene-
then *forgives*. line 12. (d) The
Faithful Ge-
neral, *ibid.*

(e) *Perolla and Izadora*, page 46, line 33. The Faithful General,
page 25, Act 3, line 1.

(f) *The British Enchanters*, page 30, line 30. The Faithful Ge-
neral, page 25, Act 3, line 1.

(g) *Arfinoc*, page 48, line 1.

(h) *Ulysses*, page 3, line 9.

(i) *Ulysses*, *ibid.*

(k) *The Faithful General*, page 26, line 12.

(l) *Ulysses*, page 34, line 35. The Faithful General, page 26,
line 13.

(m) *Ulysses*, *ibid.*

(n) *Fortune in her Wits*, page 19, line 15.

To set this Matter in a clearer Light,
it will be requisite to produce some
of the *Play-House Language*, and com-
pare it with *Scripture Expressions*;
and accordingly I shall only take three
Passages out of the *Tragedy of Ulysses*.

The *Scripture* speaks (o) thus of *Christ*. (o) *Prov. 9.*

I was set up from everlasting, from
the beginning, or ever the earth was.

E 3

When

The Stage Guilty

When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no fountains abounding with water. When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment, when he appointed the foundations of the earth. Then I was by him as one brought up with him; I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.

The Play-House expresth it thus.

(p) Ulysses,
page 42, line 1.

(p) So Jove look'd down upon the War of Atoms

And rude tumultuous Chaos, when as yet
Fair Nature, Form and Order had no
Being,

But Discord and Confusion ruin'd all.
Calm and serene upon his Throne he sat,
Fix'd there by the eternal Law of Fate,
Safe in himself because he knew his Power
And knowing what he was, he knew him-
self secure.

(q) Acts 4.
27, 28.

The Scriptures speak (q) thus of God's
Over-ruling Providence.

Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the
gentiles and people of Israel were gather-
ed together. For to do whatsoever the
law

of Swearing and Blasphemy.

55

band and the counsel of God had determined before to be done.

The Play-House (r) expresseth it thus. (r) Ulysses,

page 59, line 9.

————— 'Tis certainly decreed,
Fix'd as the Law by which Imperial Jove
According to his Prescience and his Power,
Ordains the Sons of Men to good or evil.

The Scripture speaks (s) thus of God's
Protection in Dangers.

(s) Psal.
139. 8, 9, 10.

If I ascend up into heaven, thou art
there: if I make my bed in hell, behold
thou art there. If I take the wings of
the morning, and dwell in the uttermost
parts of the sea: even there shall thy
hand lead me, and thy right hand shall
hold me.

The Stage (t) expresseth it thus.

(t) Ulysses,
page 61, line 1.

In stormy Seas, in those dread Regions where
Swarthy Cimmerians have their dark
Abode,
Divided on this World, and borderers on
Hell,
Ev'n there the Providence of Jove was
with me,

E 4

De

*Defended, chear'd, and bore me through
the Danger.*

It is also observable that in the worst
Times of Paganism, when they made
Fortune a Goddess; Juvenal, an Hea-
then, complains of it. (u)

(x) Satyra
10th verse ult.

*Nullum Numen abest, si sit Prudentia,
sed te
Nos facimus Fortuna Deam, caloque lo-
camus.*

(z) The
British En-
chanters, page
28, line penult.
and p 29, l 9.

And yet Christians are now sunk into
these very Dregs, as appears from (x)
these Lines in a late Comedy.

*To Fortune give immortal Praise,
Fortune deposes and can raise.
All is as Fortune shall bestow,
'Tis Fortune governs all below.*

There are three Acts of Worship due
to God alone, which in the Play-House
are frequently paid to Pagan Deities.

(y) Arsinoc, First, Prayer to them. Sometimes they
page 2, line 1, pray (y) to the Gods in general, and
penult. p 3, l
15, 18. p 9, l 8. p 12, l 3, 15. p 13, l 10. p 18, l 17. p 19, l 16. p 25,
l 11. p 33, l 4, 22. p 40, l 8. p 43, l 17. p 47, l 16. Fortune in her
Wits, page 22, line 26. Perolla and Izadora, page 26, line 29. p 34,
l 12. p 43, l ult. p 47, l 6. p 63, l 11. Solon, page 11, Scene 2,
line 2. p 56, l ult. p 65, l 8. The British Enchanters, page 8, line
19. p 30, l 33. Zelmane, page. 13, line 5.

sometimes

sometimes in particular, to (z) *Bac-* (z) *Ulysses*; *chus*, to (a) *Cupid*, to (b) *Diana*, to page 6, line 19. (c) *Hymen*, to (d) *Jove*, to (e) the (a) *Arfinoc*, *Moon*: and as the *Jews* were blamed page 4, line 4. in *Scripture* (f) for burning *Incense* to P 42, l 2. her, by the Name of the *Queen of Hea-* *Perolla and* *Izadora*, page 27, line 31. *ven*; so in the *Play-House* she is called The Northern (g) *Queen of Darkness*, and *Queen of* *Lass*, pag 72, *Night*. They also pray to (h) *Neptune*, line 9. The to (i) *Pallas*, to (k) *Pluto*, to (l) the *Portsmouth* *Heirefs*, page 21, line 12. P 25, l 7. p 28, Stars, and to (m) *Venus*. l antepennlt. p ult, l 24.

- (b) *Fortune in her Wits*, page 26, line 25.
 (c) *The Roving Husband Reclaim'd*, page 27, line 15.
 (d) *Perolla and Izadora*, page 45, line 30. *Solen*, page 70.
 line 14. *The Faithful General*, page 26, line 12. *Ulysses*, page 28, line 22.
 (e) *Arfinoc*, page 1, line 1.
 (f) *Jer.* 44. 25, 26, 27.
 (g) *Arfinoc*, page 1, line 1.
 (h) *Ulysses*, page 28, line 22.
 (i) *Ulysses*, page 35, line 7.
 (k) *Ulysses*, page 28, line 22.
 (l) *Arfinoc*, page 25, line 5.
 (m) *Fortune in her Wits*, page 25, line 2. *The Female Wits*, page 52, line ult. *The Portsmouth Heirefs*, page 40, line 5. *Ulysses*, page 15, line 14.

Secondly, *Praising* of them, especial- (n) *Ulysses*,
 ly with *Hymns*, giving them *Thanks*, page 63, line 10.
 and ascribing to them the *Blessings* which (o) *Mat.* 26.
Men enjoy. These *Acts* are performed 49. and 27. 29.
 sometimes in general, to (n) *the Gods*; and 28. 9.
 sometimes with (o) *Scripture* *Expres-* *Mark* 15. 18.
John 19. 3.
 sions,

(p) The fions, and sometimes in particular to
British En- (p) *Cupid*, to (q) *Jove*, to (r) *Mars*,
chanters, page 19. line 7. and (s) the *Stars*.

(q) The
Faithful General, page 25. *Act* 3. line 1. Solon, page 2. line 6, p
12. l 16.

(r) Fortune in her Wits, page 17. line 6.

(s) The Rival Brothers, page 18. line 22.

(t) Perolla Thirdly, *Swearing* by them. Some-
and Izadora, times they swear by (t) the *Gods* in ge-
page 29. line 27. Solon, neral, sometimes in particular, by (u)
page 56. line 5. *Cupid*, by (x) *Hercules*, by (y) *Jove*,
The British and (z) *Juno*, by (a) *Mars*, by (b)
Enchanters, *Neptune*, by (c) *Pallas*, and by (d) *Ve-*
page 8. line 35. *nus*; sometimes by (e) all the *Powers*,
The Faithful sometimes by (f) the *Stars*, some-
General page, 28. line 46. p. 36. l 42. p 68.
l 39. The Female Wits, page 44. line 9. The Gamester, page 40.
line ult.

(u) Liberty Asserted, page 14. line 17. Solon, page 64. line 19.

(x) The Fair Example, page 9. line 19. The Gamester, page
56. line 11.

(y) Gibraltar, page 59. line 35. Solon, page 40. line 28. p 71.
l. 6. The Confederacy, page 13. line penult. The Female Wits,
page 44. line 12. The Gamester, page 31. line 11. Ulysses, page 4.
line 29. p 30. l 3. p 41. l 21.

(z) The Gamester, page 52. line 12. Ulysses, page 11. line 17.
p 12. l 25.

(a) The Amorous Miser, page 45. line 3. Ulysses, page 40 line 18.

(b) The Baffed Table, page 22. line 11.

(c) Ulysses. page 41. line 21.

(d) The Fair Example, page 7. line antepenult. The Loyal
Subject, page 70. line 3. The Northern Lads, page 52. line 15.
Ulysses page 3. line penult.

(e) Zelmane, page 45. line 26.

(f) zelmane, page 39. line 22.

times

times by (g) their guardian Stars, and sometimes by the All-seeing Sun. To this I shall add, That sometimes they (i) intreat for Jupiter's sake, and sometimes adjure (k) in the Name of Jove, and (l) in the Name of Wonder. Besides, they frequently imitate Thunder; a Crime, I think, peculiar to Caligula and Salmoneus, two of the vilest Heathens, and to the English Stage: And as the Scripture (m) reckons this as one of the glorious Works of God; so the Actors (n) sometimes ascribe it to the Pagan Deities, but (o) generally to the Power of the Devil. In the Scripture [p] God is said to cast forth Lightnings; in the Play-House [q] they are the Effect of Magical Arts and Conjurations.

(g) Zelmane, page 4. line 18.

(h) Zelmane, page 27. line 27.

(i) The Confederacy, page 22. line 37.

(k) The Confederacy, page 50. line 35.

(l) The Biter, page 40. line 23.

(m) Exod. 9. 23. 1 Sam. 2. 10, and 7. 10, and 12. 17. 18. 2 Sam. 22. 14. Job 26. 14. and 37. 4, 5 and 40. 9. Psalm 18. 12, and 29. 3, and 77. 18.

(n) Ulysses, page 34. line 35. p. 35. l. 7 and 25.

(o) The British Enchanters, page 1. Scene 1. line 5. p. 39. l. 12. See below in the Reference [q]

[p] 2 Sam. 22. 15. Job 38. 25, 35. Psal 18. 14, and 7. 18, and 97. 4, and 135. 7, and 144. 6. Jer 10. 13.

[q] Mackbeth, Printed 1695, Act 1. Scene 1. line 1, and 2. page 3. l. 21. The British Enchanters, page 16, line 19. p. 3. l. penult, p. 34, l. 8.

And as they swear by the Pagan Deities; so they frequently swear by Men, by the Souls of [r] those who begat them, by the Souls of their great

[r] Gibraltar, page 12, line 20.

(s) Solon, [s] great Ancestors, by their [t] Fa-
 page 38, line 2. thers Tomb, and [u] injur'd Shade,
 [t] Love the Leveller, by the [x] Majesty of Pekin (in Chi-
 page 13, line na) by the [y] Great Lama (in Chi-
 24. na) by the (z) most potent and se-

(u) The Faithful Gene-
 ral, page 68. rene Cham, in China, by their (a)
 line 38. Hopes of Catiline, by (b) George, by

[x] The Biter, page 19. (c) St. Patrick, and by (d) the Great
 line 27. p 25, Ulysses. I really believe, that they
 14. p 32, I had not invented so many, and such
 20. strange Sorts of Oaths; but only be-

(y) The Biter, page 20, cause our Saviour and St. James have
 line 10. forbidden them (e) to swear at all.

(z) The Biter, page 53. line 23.

(a) The Female Wits, page 39, line 21.

(b) The Roving Husband reclaim'd, page 15, line 5.

(c) The Stage Coach, page 4, line 17,

(d) Ulysses, page 2, line 24.

(e) Matth. 5. 34. James 5. 12.

(f) See
 Pool's Synop=
 sis, upon Gen.
 42. 16.

It is generally owned by (f) Com-
 mentators, that Joseph sinned when he
 swore by the life of Pharoah, and that
 neither the Custom of the Place, nor
 the Vehemency of the Occasion could
 excuse the Fact. But it is most certain

(g) Eusebi-
 us his Ecclesi-
 astical History,
 Book 4. Chap.
 15.

that (g) Polycarp, when he suffered
 Martyrdom, might have been released
 if he would have sworn by the Fortune
 of Caesar, and gave this Reason for his
 Refusal; If thou requirest this, Hear
 freely,

freely, I am a Christian. However, the Reader need not wonder at these *Oaths*, if he peruseth (*b*) some other *Expressions* of the like Nature, mentioned in the Margin.

(*b*) *Perolla* and *Izadora*, page 4. line 27. p 27. l 7. p 62, l 27. *Solon*, page 19, line 14. *Ul, fies*, page

2, line 5. p 39. l 3. p 52. l 11.

It was *Lucifer's* Pride to affect a (*i*) likeness to *God*, for which he was cast out of *Heaven*; but now the Epithet [*] *Godlike* is frequently bestow'd by one *Actor* to another. I shall give some Instances of this Nature, out of the late Play, called *The British Enchanters*.

(*i*) *Isaiah* 14: 12, 13, 14.

[*] See Reference (*b*)

Page 11. line 23.

*Like Mars he look'd as Terrible and Strong,
Like Jove Majestick, like Apollo young;
With all their Attributes divinely grac'd,
And sure their Thunder in his Arm was
[plac'd.*

Page 35. line 3.

*Were Amadis restor'd to my Esteem,
I could reject a Deity for him.*

This is spoken of other Men, let us therefore see what an *Actor* saith of himself, p. 6, l. 23.

Our

Our Priests have better learn'd what now
is ill;

Can, when I please, be good; and none
shall dare

Preach or expound, but what their King
would bear.

E're they interpret, let them mark my
Nod,

My Voice their Thunder, this right Arm
their God.

(*) The Loyal Subject,
page 43, line 15. The Mistake, page 6, line 23. The Northern Lass, page 54, line ult.

[k] Love the Leveller, page 42, line 2.

(l) Solon, page 64, line 15.

And as they swear by Men, so they also frequently swear by Women; (*) By our Lady, or the Virgin Mary; (k) By the Life of their dear Princess, and (l) others present upon the Stage: Nay, the Expressions they use to Women favours of such Blasphemy as is dreadful to relate, and would be so resented in any Place but the Stage, where it passeth for Fine Language; of which I shall give some Instances.

Liberty Asserted, page 25, line 29.

————— Do I accept her?
With greater Rapture than the Wretch
that's freed
From Death's convulsive Pangs embraceth
Heav'n.

The

The Careless Husband, p. 35, l. 36.

*You have fix'd me yours, to the last
Existence of my Soul's Eternal Entity.*

The Confederacy page 28, line 28,
spoken of another Man's Wife.

*Tell her, I am all Hers; Tell her, my
Body is Hers; Tell her, my Soul is Hers,
and tell her, my Estate is Hers.*

I could fill several Pages with this Language; but he who desires more, may turn to the (m) Quotations in the Margin, where his Curiosity will be abundantly gratified.

(m) Abra-
mule, Epilogue
line 3. Arsinoc
page 1. line
6. p 3. l pen-
ult. p 4. l 9.
p 16. l 1.
Gibraltar,

page 58. line 12. and p 13. l 30. spoken of an Intreaguing Pimp.

Liberty Asserted, page 40. line 9. Love the Leveller, page 62, line 31. p 63. l 17. p 65, l 11, 22. Solon, page 20. line 23. p 64. l 15. The Amorous Miser, page 5. line 27. p 57. l 18. The British Enchanters, page 7. line 8 and 29. p 15. l 13. The Careless Husband, page 27, line 33. p 65. l 1. The Conquest of Spain, page 12. line 5. The Fair Example, page 18. line 15. The Faithful General, page 21. line 16. The Female Wits, page 54. line 23.

The Gamester, page 5. line 11. p 41. l 19. p 61. l 1. The Lawyer's Fortune, p 16. line 28. p 46. l penult. The Portsmouth Heir-ess, page 56. line 12. spoken by one in a Parson's Habit. p 10. l 28. p 52. l 22. The Rival Brothers, page 6. line 27, to 37. p 15, l 19. p 81. l 11. The Roving Husband Reclaim'd, page 47. line 14.

Zelmane, page 6. line 6. p 70. l 10.

The

(n) Airay
upon the Phi-
lippians, chap.
1. verse 8.
page 99, 100.

(o) Amas
8. 14.

(p) Jer. 5. 7.

The Words of an *antient* Divine
(n) of this Nation are so remarkable
concerning the *Play-House Oaths*, that
I cannot forbear to repeat them at
large. *How darest thou*, faith he,
whosoever thou art, to swear by the
Masse, by thy Faith, by thy Troth
by our Lady, by St. George or the
like? *Are these thy Gods whom thou*
hast made to serve them? Or darest
thou to give the worship due to God
unto any but unto him? *Did the Lord*
threaten ruin upon Israel, because they
swore by their Idols in Dan and Beer-
sheba, saying (o) they that swear by
the Sin of Samaria, and say, thy God
O Dan, liveth, and the manner of Beer-
sheba liveth, even they shall fall, and ne-
ver rise up again, and darest thou swear
by the Masse, which was the Sin of
England, and is the Sin of Rome? Did
(p) the Lord tell Judah, that (p) her Child-
ren had forsaken him, because they
swore by them that were no Gods?
And darest thou swear by our Lady
by St. George, by St. John, by St.
Thomas, or the like, which are no Gods?
Dost thou not see that thus swearing
thou forsakest God, and bringest Ruin
upon thy self? Did our blessed Saviour

tel

tell the Scribes and Pharisees, saying,
(q) Whosoever sweareth by the altar,
sweareth by it, and by all things
thereon: And whosoever sweareth by
the temple, sweareth by it, and by
him that dwelleth therein: And who-
soever sweareth by heaven, sweareth
by the throne of God, and by him
that sitteth thereon? and dost thou
think that when thou swearest by thy
Faith, thou swearest not by him in
whom thou believest? Or when thou
swearest by thy Troth, thou swearest
not by him in whom thou trustest? &c.
In one Word, thou that commonly swear-
est by any thing that is not God, tell
me what thinkest thou? Dost thou there-
in swear by God, or no? If so, then
thou takest his Name in vain, and he
will not hold thee guiltless. If not,
then thou forsakest God, in that thou
swearest by that which is no God.

(q) *Matth.*
23. 20, 21,
22.

There are three Oaths mention'd by
this Reverend Author very common
upon the Stage, namely their Swearing
(r) by the Mass, (s) by their Faith,
and (t) by their Troth. How scanda-
lously the Stage is guilty may be seen
from the following Margin. The

(r) The
Loyal Subject,
page 69, line
34. The Roy-
al Merchant,
page 29, line
25. p 30, l 20.
p 51, l 4, and
15. p 54, l 13.
(s) By my
Faith. The

Confederacy, page 30, line 12. p 45, l 33. p 63, l 16. p 71 l 13.

F

Th:

The Loyal Subject, page 47. line 40. The Northern Lads, page 16. line 32. p. 41. l. 29. p. 60. l. 1. Upon my Faith. The Carolick Husband, page 25. line 9. The Confederacy, page 22. line 29. The Northern Lads, page 27. line 36. In good Faith. Squire Trelooby, page 11. line antepenult. The Amorous Miser, page 12. line 27. p. 58. l. 25. The Lawyer's Fortune, page 49. line 17. The Northern Lads, page 30. line antepenult. Good Faith! Arsinoc, page 26. line 3. The Mistake, page 1. line 8. p. 7. l. 27. p. 16. l. 29. p. 53. l. 6. The Northern Lads, page 6. line 30. Gude Feath. The Northern Lads, page 19. line 9. p. 23. l. 24. Feath. The Northern Lads, page 18. line 33. p. 23. l. 20. p. 36. l. 33. Faith and Troth. Gibraltar, page 5. line 18. The Amorous Miser, page 3. line 24. p. 49. l. 1. p. 56. l. 22, 23, 24, 25. four times in four lines. The Biter, page 13. line 5. p. 14. l. 31. p. 55. l. 1. p. 56. l. 8. Ifaith. The Gamester, page 44. line 14. Ifaith. An Act at Oxford, page 46. line 2. Gibraltar, page 4. line 24. p. 6. l. 32. p. 23. l. 1. Sheet F p. 41. l. 15. Sheet F p. 44. l. 11, 30 and 37. Sheet G p. 51. l. 30. Hampstead Heath, page 52. line 3. Love at first Sight, page 23. line 5. p. 13. l. 9. p. 18. l. 27. p. 42. l. 17. p. 46. l. 29. p. 55. Act 5. l. 12. p. 66. l. 25. Love the Leveller, page 18. line 1. p. 24. l. antepenult. p. 51. l. 26. p. 58. l. 23. The Bassett Table, page 44. line 27. p. 45. l. 25. The Biter, page 25. l. ult. The Confederacy, page 28. line ult. p. 43. l. 28. p. 49. l. 24. The Fair Example, page 1. l. penult. p. 39. l. 16. p. 65. l. antepenult. The Female Wits, page 17. line 16. p. 18. l. 8. The Gamester, page 63. l. 12. The Loyal Subject, page 44. line 35. The Metamorphosis, page 40. line 4. The Mistake, page 27. line 17. The Northern Lads, page 5. line 39. p. 5. l. 10. p. 17. l. 12. The Stage Coach, page 14. line 20. (1) By my Troth. Gibraltar. Sheet G page 56. line 34. Love at first Sight, page 26. line 3. Love the Leveller, page 22. line 5. The Metamorphosis, page 29. line antepenult. The Mistake, page 16. line 18. The Northern Lads, page 19. line 7. p. 55. l. 19. The Roving Husband Reclaim'd, page 14. line 13. The Royal Merchant, page 35. line 6. In Troth. Gibraltar, page 16. line 30. Solon, page 24. line ult. Squire Trelooby, page 7. line 1. p. 9. l. penult. The Amorous Miser, page 44. line 9 and 19. The Gamester, page 4. line 2. The Loyal Subject, page 32. line 23. p. 43. l. 9. The Northern Lads, page 36. line 4 and 36. p. 39. l. 21. p. 60. l. 15. The Rival Brothers, page 22. line 11. Upon my Troth. The Loyal Subject, page 27. line 29. Troth. Fortune in her Wits, page 29. line 14. Solon, page 6. line antepenult. p. 53. l. 10. The Amorous Miser, page 33. line 3. The Fair Example, page 39. line ult. The Female

Female Wits, Epilogue, line 24. The Northern Lass, page 1. line 7.
p. 60. l. 3. The Portsmouth Heiress, page 32. l. 10. p. 45. l. 28.
The Royal Merchant, page 12. line 5. p. 71. l. 28.

Commonness of these *Oaths* takes off the Sence of them, so that many People are guilty of them, before they are aware; and others think them to be no *Sins* at all, but are very apt to excuse them and plead for them. However, none of these external Circumstances can alter the Nature of Good and Evil. *Vice* is not at all the better, tho' it hath many Followers, and as many to plead for it. What the *Scripture* condemns, our pleading for it will never excuse. The *Scripture* tells us *Matth. 12. 36. that of every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account at the day of judgment;* and this Text is of a greater Latitude in its Meaning, than many imagine. Some say, that these are not *Oaths*, but only solemn Asseverations; tho' I must confess that a solemn Asseveration, by any thing that is sacred, carrieth in it so much of an *Oath*, that I know not how to distinguish between them: And I must be excus'd if I believe my Blessed Saviour notwithstanding the Cavils, and frivolous Excuses of an Atheistical Age.

(u) An Act
at Oxford,
page 2. line 15.
p. 7. l. 22. p.
28. l. 20. p.
49. l. 11. p.
52. l. 5. p. 54.
l. 19. p. 56. l.
7. Fortune
in her Wits,
page 6. line 18.

The Word (u) 'Faith, as it is frequently us'd by the Stage is an Oath, and the same as *by my Faith*, and yet of this there are near two Hundred Instances in our late Plays. That it is an Oath is evident, because in all Languages there is a Figure call'd *El-*

p. 7. l. 11. p. 11. l. 27. p. 29. l. 16. Gibraltar, page 1. line 4. p. 30. l. 32. p. 8. l. 5 and 36. p. 15. l. 22 and 27. p. 16. l. 4 and 13. p. 19. l. 22. p. 20. l. antepenult. p. 21. l. 1. p. 24. l. 28, 32 and penult. Sheet E p. 33. l. 6. Sheet E p. 36. l. 25 and 28. Sheet F p. 45. l. 30. Sheet F p. 47. l. 19. Sheet G p. 56. l. 4. Sheet I p. 52. l. 12 and 18. p. 62. l. 25. p. 63. l. 4. p. 64. l. 5. Hampstead Heath, p. 9. l. 29. p. 18. l. 30. p. 32. l. 1. p. 55. l. 12. p. 57. l. 17. Love at first Sight, page 2. line 27. p. 3. l. 34. p. 5. l. 16. p. 43. l. 3. p. 55. Act 5. l. 2. Love the Leveller, page 27. p. 3. p. 37. l. 28. p. 54. l. ult. p. 57. l. 19. p. 59. l. 4. p. 60. l. antepenult. p. 61. l. 5 and 30. Solon, page 10. line 15. Squire Trelooby, page 5. line 8. p. 8. l. 4 and 24. p. 13. l. 16. p. 49. l. 14. p. 52. l. 11. The Amorous Miser, Prologue, line 5. page 1. line 11. p. 2. l. 1. p. 3. l. 18. p. 7. l. 17. p. 11. l. 4 and 9. p. 12. l. 2 and 8. p. 13. l. 3. p. 17. l. 5. p. 18. l. 3, 7 and 19. p. 27. line ult. p. 31. l. penult. p. 42. l. 1. p. 44. l. 7. p. 49. l. 1. p. 49. l. 11. p. 53. l. 19. p. 54. l. 23 and 25. p. 55. l. 30. p. 59. l. 5. The Basset Table, page 9. line penult. p. 10. l. antepenult. p. 20. l. 22. p. 43. l. 1. p. 47. l. 4. p. 48. l. 11. p. 49. l. 8 and 33. p. 56. l. 20. p. 57. l. ult. p. ult. l. 4. The Biter, page 16. line 33. p. 23. l. 16. p. 25. l. 1. p. 36. l. 4. p. 51. l. 17. p. 61. l. 15. The Careless Husband, page 3. line 8. The Cares of Love, page 15. line 35. p. 42. l. 10. p. 48. l. 2. The Confederacy, page 5. l. 12. p. 68. l. penult. The Faithful General, Epilogue, line 20. The Female Wits, page 6. line 11. p. 15. l. 11 and 31. p. 27. l. 4. p. 34. l. 8. p. 37. l. 25. The Gamester, page 33. line 26. p. 45. l. 19. The Lawyer's Fortune, page 7. line 13. p. 11. l. 2. p. 13. l. 8. p. 15. l. 17. p. 49. Scene 2. l. 8. The Loyal Subject, page 47. line 38. p. 48. l. 7. p. 53. l. 4 and 11. The Lying Lover, page 2. line 8. p. 3. l. 21. p. 20. l. 6. p. 26. l. 6. p. 38. l. 8. p. 44. l. 33. p. 50. l. 17. The Metamorphosis, page 30. line 19. p. 31. l. 12. p. 36. l. 16. The Northern Lads, page 1. line 5. p. 4. l. 8. p. 7. Scene 5. l. 12. p. 8; l. 2. p. 20. Scene 3. l. 20. p. 72. l. 24. The

The Portsmouth Heiress, page 1, line 9. p 4, l 27. p 8, l 26. p 9, l 7. p 10, l 23 and ult. p 11, l 24. p 12, l 8 and 25. p 14, l 4. p 30, l 4. p 31, l 16. p 32, l 5. p 33, l 18. p 41, l 32. p 54, l 26. p 59, l 21. p 66, l 7. p 68, l 11. p 69, l 23. The Quacks, page 23, line 29. The Rival Brothers, page 74, line 3. The Roving Husband Reclaim'd, page 6, line 16. p 7, l 19. p 15, l 18. p 20, l 3. p 25, l 6. p 27, l 9. p 41, l 4. p 42, l 3. p 54, l 24. p 56, l 10. The Royal Merchant, page 26, line 32. page 39, l 20. p 57, l 27. p 71, l 27. The Stage Beaux robb'd in a Blanket, page 51, line 6. The Stage Coach, Prologue, line 20. Epilogue, line 29. The Tender Husband, page 15, line 3. p 60, l 13.

lipfis, which is spoken of in most Grammars. This is a Leaving out of some Words in a Sentence, which must be added to make the Sence compleat, and it is always imply'd, where the Sence is imperfect. Now the Word *Faith* standing thus alone is Nonsense, and therefore other Words are imply'd to make Sence of it; and if it is thus turn'd into Sence there is no Way to excuse it, from being an Oath. If it is objected, that the Word *Faith* is no Oath, but the Words *by my Faith* are an Oath; I may affirm for the same Reason, that the Words of our Saviour, *Job. 17. 11. Holy Father, keep those whom thou hast given me*, is no Prayer; but if it had been *O Holy Father*, then it had been a Prayer. According to the Scripture Interpretation, some particular Words may

The Stage Guilty

be Oaths, tho' the *Formula jurandi*, these little Particles are left out, and must be supplied by the Figure *Ellipsis*. The Particles among the *Greeks* are either *Μα* or *Να*. Now these are left out, in *Heb. 6. 13.* where God said to *Abraham*, surely, blessing I will bless thee: And yet it is here said that God sware by himself, because he could swear by no greater, and confirm'd the truth of his promise with an oath. The Word in *Greek* is *Αμήν*, *Amen*, and is reckon'd as an Oath, because it is one of the Names of *Christ*, who *Rev. 3. 14.* is call'd the *Amen*, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God. If it is said, that in the Word *Faith* is not meant *God*, or *Christ*; I must affirm that it is false. It plainly refers to the Object of our Faith, and consequently to every Person mention'd in our *Creed*. As therefore the *Jews*, when they swore by the Temple, or by Heaven, were guilty of swearing by God, who dwelt in the one, and whose Throne was in the other; so *Christians*, when they swear by their Faith, are guilty of swearing by that God in whom they believe. Perhaps such an

Oath

Oath is not punished by the Laws of Man, tho' all *profane Oaths* are punishable; however, the Defect of our Laws, or Neglect of Execution, makes not the *Sin* the more excusable in the Sight of God; but when it is not punished by Men in this World, the God who will not hold such *Sinners* guiltless, seems to reserve the immediate Execution of Vengeance for himself in the other. And therefore, notwithstanding all their Excuses, the *Stage* is guilty in this, as well as in other *Oaths* of a more horrid Nature; insomuch, that we have Cause daily to pray to God, and say, *From such swearing and blasphemous Language, Good Lord deliver us.*

CHAP.

F 4

C H A P. III.

The Stage Guilty of Cursing.

Profane *Cursing* is a *Sin* most positively forbidden by God in [a] the Holy Scriptures. Such Language ought not to proceed out of our Mouths, nor be harbour'd so much as [b] in our Thoughts. No (c) Provocation whatsoever will excuse it. We must not *curse* even those who *curse* us, who are our *Enemies*, who *hate* us, who *despightfully use* us, and *persecute* us. We must not imitate such but God, who continually poureth out his *Blessings* upon all. We must not *render evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing*; as knowing that we are *called of God to inherit a blessing*: And thus must we *overcome evil with good*. It was therefore foolish Advice which was given to *Job* in his Afflictions, (d) that he should *Curse God and die*, and it was *repented* accordingly. This *Sin* in some Cases among the *Jews* was a (e) capital Crime, and the Son of (f) *Shelomith*, by the Command of God was stoned for the same. When (f)

Skinner

Shimei cursed David, tho' whilst he lived, he forgave the Sin, as against himself, yet he would not pass it by, as it related to God, or might have been of ill Consequence to the Nation; but he gave Orders at his Decease, that (g) the Man who thus *cursed*, should be put to Death, which were executed accordingly. Nay in such Cases as were not punished by Man, God himself was the Executioner of his Wrath upon them that were guilty; and therefore David saith (b) that *for the sin of their mouth, and for the words of their lips, they shall be taken in their pride; and for cursing and lying which they speak*, and tells us the sad Estate of such a Sinner, that (i) *As he loved cursing, so it shall come unto him; as he delighted not in blessing, so it shall be far from him. As he cloathed himself with cursing like as with a garment; so it shall come into his bowels like water, and like oyl into his bones. It shall be unto him as the garment which covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.* When Goliath (k) *cursed David*, he and the whole Army were afterward destroyed; and Vengeance seems to be but the

(g) 1 Kings
2. 8, 9, 44,
45, 46.
(b) Psal.
59. 12.
(i) Psal.
109. 17, 18,
19. *The*
Verbs in
Hebrew are
in the future
Tense; and
therefore these
Verses contain rather
a Prophecy
than an Im-
precation.
(k) 1 Sam.
17. 43, 49,
50, 51.

the natural Effect of such Imprecations.

(1) *Pfal.* The Curse of God is a dreadful thing.
 37. 23. As (!) such who are blessed of him shall
 (no) *Manb.* inherit the land; so they who are cur-
 25. 41, 46. sed shall be rooted out. Nay shall (n)
 (n) *Pfal.* be cast into the fire prepared for the
 10. 7. *Rom.* Devil and his Angels. He therefore
 3. 14, 18. (o) *Numb.* (n) whose mouth was full of cursing
 23. 8. and bitterness, was always reckon'd as
 a wicked Man, and one who had no fear
 of God before his eyes. To this, I
 may add, that Balaam, (o) who was a
 notorious Enchanter, and who loved the
 wages of unrighteousness, dar'd not be
 guilty of it, tho' he might receive his
 House full of Silver and Gold as a
 Reward; and therefore refus'd it,
 without a special Leave from God
 himself, which never was granted.
 How, saith he, shall I curse them, whom
 God hath not cursed? and how shall I defy
 them, whom the Lord hath not defied?

This being therefore consider'd, it
 is dreadful even to relate; how hor-
 ridly the Actors on the Stage are
 guilty in this Respect, and in what
 direct Opposition they set themselves
 to the Word of God, and the Exercise
 of Religion. In the Church we pray to
 God, that his Name may be Hallowed; In
 the

the *Play-House* it is profaned by bitter Oaths and Curses. In the *Church* we are taught not to take the name of the Lord our God in vain, because he will not hold such Sinners guiltless: In the *Play-House* his Name is spoken in Derision, and he is call'd upon to do his worst. In the *Church* we profess to believe that God is *Almighty*: In the *Play-House* he is petition'd to pour out the fiercest of his Wrath and Indignation upon them; as if *Heav'n* was to be despis'd, and *Hell* and *Damnation* rather to be desir'd.

Sometimes the *Actors* curse themselves, if that is not true which they say, or if they perform not their Promise. In such Cases they wish that they may (p) be damn'd, (q) die, or (r) rot, (s) be hang'd, (t) confounded, (u) stricken blind, or (x) stupid, that the

(p) The Roving Husband Reclaim'd, page 11. line 14. p 38, 19. The Stage Beaux tofs'd in a

Blanket, page 15, line 1.

(q) The Stage Beaux tofs'd in a Blanket, page 4, line 30. p 5, l 15 and 42. p 6, l 9. p 14, l 2. p 16, l 25. p 19, l 6. p 43, l antepenult. p 44, l 10 and 26. p 57, l 11 and 32. p 58, l 18, penult and ult. p 59, l 23 and 25.

(r) The Roving Husband Reclaim'd, page 56, line 21. The Stage Beaux tofs'd in a Blanket, page 8, line 25. p 9, l 6.

(s) Love at first Sight, page 4, line 4. Solon, page 2, line 13. The Loyal Subject, page 4, line 35.

(t) The Female Wits, page 43, line 13.

(u) The Careless Husband, page 19, line 12

(x) The Careless Husband, page 34, line 10.

Derwee

(y) The Basset Table, *Derwee* may (y) take, or (z) fetch them, that (a) the Devil may blow their Heads off, may (b) burn them, may (c) choak them, may (d) drive them, (e) upon a Red Herring, may (f) fetch them, and (g) take them, that (h) Heaven may curse them, (i) the Sun may burn them, (k) Curse may catch them, (l) Hell may take them, and (m) their Breath may be stop'd. One (n) wishes, that the four Winds may conspire his eternal Disorder, another that (o) Dogs and Kites may eat

(y) The Basset Table, page 24, line 30. p 32, l 20. The Careless Husband, page 5, line 28. p 6, l antepenult.

(z) The Careless Husband, page 3, line 19. The Confederacy, page 16, line 5.

(a) The Basset Table, page 53, line 6.

(b) The Roving Husband Reclaim'd, page 15. line 26.

(c) The Stage Beaux toss'd in a Blanket, Prologue line 11.

(d) The Careless Husband, page 16, line antepenult.

(e) An Act at Oxford, page 58, line 30.

(f) The Confederacy, page 66, line 32.

(g) Love at first Sight, page 56, line 12. Squire Trelooby, page 5, line 22. p 9, l 15. The Basset Table, page 12, line 9. The Stage Beaux toss'd in a Blanket, page 8 line 32.

(h) The Royal Merchant, page 42, line 6.

(i) The Careless Husband, page 18, line 33.

(k) The Careless Husband, page 32, line 10.

(l) The Loyal Subject, page 57, line 28.

(m) The Careless Husband, page 20, line 1. p 52, l 15 p 65, l 37.

(n) An Act at Oxford, page 9, line 8. Hampstead Heath page 11. line 17.

(o) The Loyal Subject, page 65, line 3.

up his Heart, and another, that (p) the *Eternal Frowns of all the Female Sex may doubly damn him*; as if the Displeasure of his *Mistress* was a greater Torment than the *Loss of God and Heav'n*. Nay the Conditions, upon which these *Horrid Imprecations* are grounded, are oftentimes broken upon the Stage, and then they contain an absolute *Curse* without any Restriction. Thus (q) the *Ld. Worthby* curseth himself.

(p) The Careless Husband, page 45, line penult.

(q) The Basset Table page 14, line 32.

May I become the veryst Wretch alive, and all the Ills imaginable fall upon my Head, if ever I speak to her, [the Lady Reveller] more; and yet they (r) afterward meet, and are [s] join'd in Marriage at the end of the Play.

(r) The Basset Table page 39 and 56.
[s] Page 62.

In the *Gamester*, Valere wish'd, that when ever he play'd with the Dice again, [t] all the Curses rank'd with *Angelica's Disdain* might pursue him; and yet he was [u] afterward guilty, even [x] with *Angelica* her self in Disguise, and in the End [y] the Disdain is turn'd to Marriage.

[t] Page 25, line 23.

[u] Page 50.
[x] Page 53.
[y] Page 67.

In the *Comedy* call'd *The Mistake*, [z] *Leonora* wisheth, that if she begs Pardon of *Carlos*, *Heav'n* may never pardon her; and *Carlos* speaks in more dread-

[z] Page 40, line 9.

- [a] *Ibid.* line 14. dreadful Language, [a] I assure you with Heav'n and with Hell for seconds, for may the Joys of one fly from me, whilst the Pains of t'other overtake me, if ever I see you more: Nay he goes farther yet, [b] may I starve, perish, rot, be blasted, dead, damn'd, or any other thing that Men or Gods can think on, if on any Occasion whatever, I from this Moment change one Word or Look with you; and yet they [c] meet afterward on the Stage, as familiarly as ever.
- [b] Page 41, line 22.
- [c] Page 43, and 44.

[d] Page 49, Sheet I, line 12.

I weary the Reader with this Hellish Language, and therefore I shall add but [d] one Quotation more, of this Nature, out of the same Comedy. I imprecate, saith Lorenzo, the utmost Pow'rs of Heav'n to shower upon my Head the Deadliest of its Wrath, I ask that all Hells Torments may unite, to wound my Soul with an eternal Anguish, if wicked Leonora be'n't my Wife. To this Leonora answers. Why then! may all those Curses pass him by, and wrap me in their everlasting Pains, if ever once I had a fleeting Thought of making him my Husband.

This is strange Diversion for a Christian Stage, especially for Comedy; and

and yet the half is not discover'd.

The *Actors* curse themselves without any Restriction, that they may [e] be damn'd [f] dye, and [g] rot. Sometimes they wish that [h] some Whirlwind may bear them thence, that [i] the Earth may open her Mouth, and swallow them up, that they may [k] have the Pox, [l] Lightning may blast them, [m] the Devce may take them, [n] Perdition may seize them, [o] Curse may catch them, [p] Perdition, Shame and Disappointment may confound them, [q] Vengeance may choak them, [r] their

[e] Love at first Sight, page 16, line 21.
The Biter, page 13, line 30.
The Female Wits, page 25, line 4.
The Lawyer's Fortune, page 38, line 13.
The Stage Beaux toss'd in a Blanket, page 11, line 9.
[f] Love at

first Sight, page 39, line 1, 9, 26, 39 and ult. p 58, l 3, 17 and 22. p 60, l 31. p 61, l 7. p 62, l 4, 37 and ult. p 63, l 6. p 64, l 2, 14, 21, 32 and penult. p 65, l 37. p 67, l 33. p 68, l 3. The Stage Beaux toss'd in a Blanket, page 5, line 5 and 11. p 7, l 21. p 11, l 11. p 12, l 26. p 16, l 29. p 17, l 14, 21 and 26. p 19, l 6, 15 and 26. p 20, l 25. p 27, l 13. p 31, l 7. p 44, l 17. p 45, l 21. p 46, l 1. p 51, l 12. p 52, l 12 and 27. p 54, l 14. p 56, l 10. p 57, l 1. p 58, l 12 and 17. p 59, l 23 and 24.

[g] The Confederacy, page 67, line 28. The Stage Beaux toss'd in a Blanket, page 8, line 29 and antepenult. p 10, l 28. p 21, l antepenult. p 36, l 31. p 43, l 19. p 51, l antepenult.

[h] Fortune in her Wits, page 56, line 12. The British Enchanters, page 32, line 1.

[i] The British Enchanters, page 32, line 2.

[k] Gibraltar, page 2, line 28.

[l] Liberty Asserted, page 51, line 12.

[m] Squire Treloby, page 36, line 8.

[n] Perolla and Izadora, page 12, line 8.

[o] The Careless Husband, page 19, line 3.

[p] The Portsmouth Heiress, page 71, line 9.

[q] The Fair Example, page 66, line 18.

[r] The Careless Husband, page 28, line 35.

Breathe

[s] The
Amorous Mi-
ser, page 49,
line 23.

[t] The
Portsmouth
Heiress, page
54, line 22.

[u] Love at
first Sight,
page 25, line
10.

Breath may be *stopt*. and [s] their *Fa-
mily* may be *hang'd*. One [t] curses
the *Stars which rul'd at his Nativity*,
and [u] another wishes that the *Curse*
may light *upon* him, because he is sick.
The *Damn'd in Hell* are not arriv'd to
this Wickedness. Tho' they *blaspheme*,
yet they dare not call for more *Curses*
upon their Heads. They know, to
their eternal Sorrow, what a dreadful
thing the *Curse of God* is; and had
our *Actors* but the Faith of *Devils*,
they would certainly tremble at that,
which they now make their constant
Diversion.

And now, since they thus *curse them-
selves* it cannot be wonder'd at that
they so frequently *curse* others. The
Loyal Subject [x] run's on with most
dreadful *Imprecations* of this Nature,
in eight and Twenty Lines together,
and [y] another in two and Twenty,
as if the *Poets* and *Actors* strove to out-
vye each other in this *dreadful Language*.
The Instances of this Nature are too
many to be transcrib'd, and of too
great a Variety to be reduc'd into
Order. Besides I must forbear, lest I
surfeit the *Reader*. However, he who
would view them in their proper Soil,
may

[x] Page
12, line 32.
&c.

[y] Abra-
Mule, page 29.
line 1. &c.

may turn to the [z] Quotations mention'd in the Margin.

[z] An AA at Oxford,

page 1, line 1.

p. 16. l. 14.

p. 19. l. 30. p. 23. l. 9. p. 22. l. penult. p. 24. l. 11, 17 and 25. p. 31. l. 14. p. 34. A& 4. l. 14. p. 54. l. 4. p. 58. l. 33. Fortune in her Wits, page 4, line 9. p. 5. l. 5. p. 14. l. ult. p. 54. l. 5, 6 and 11. Gibraltar, page 12, line 27 and ult. p. 16. l. 35. p. 20. l. 25. Sheet E p. 33. l. 1. Sheet E p. 40. l. 23. Sheet F p. 41. l. 6 and 26. p. 63. l. 20. p. 64. l. 21. p. 68. l. 3 and 21. Hampstead Heath, page 22. line 7. p. 25. l. 15 and 26. p. 35. l. 7. p. 39. l. 14. Liberty Asserted, page 50. line 38. Love at first Sight, page 7. line 16. p. 12. l. 9. p. 13. l. 5. p. 15. l. 28. p. 16. l. 7 and 8. p. 29. l. 16. p. 42. l. 24. p. 47. l. 2. p. 51. l. 7. p. 52. l. 5. Love the Leveller, page 8. line 3 and 18. p. 22. l. 6. p. 39. l. 11. p. 57. l. 6. Perolla and Izadora, page 12. line 3 and 11. p. 47. l. 7. Solon, page 14. Scene 3. line 5. p. 63. l. 9. p. 69. l. 11. Squire Trelooby, page 5. line 16. p. 26. l. 13. The Cares of Love, page 4. line 4. p. 13. l. 20. p. 36. l. 7. p. 41. l. 15. p. 47. l. 24. p. 48. l. 5. p. 49. l. 17. The Confederacy, page 2. line 25. p. 19. l. 34. p. 31. l. 2. p. 40. l. 29. p. 45. l. 31. p. 59. l. 8 and 12. The Conquest of Spain, page 5. line 6. p. 19. l. antepenult. p. 20. l. 1. The Fair Example, page 24. line 2. p. 25. l. 18. p. 35. l. 14 and 25. The Female Wits, page 4. line 28. p. 12. l. 26. p. 19. l. 17. p. 56. l. 15. p. 57. l. 22. p. 64. l. 5. p. 65. l. 12. p. 66. l. 2. The Gamester, page 29. line 9. p. 31. l. 32. p. 32. l. 2. p. 45. l. penult. p. 54. l. 30. p. 68. l. 17. p. 69. l. 7. The Lawyer's Fortune, page 14. line 18. The Loyal Subject, page 39. l. 42. p. 73. l. 30. The Portsmouth Helrefs, page 14. line 19. p. 21. l. 24. p. 53. l. antepenult. p. 70. l. ult. The Roving Husband Reclaim'd, page 5. line 5. p. 15. l. 4. p. 16. l. 16. p. 21. l. 23. The Royal Merchant, page 25. line 17. p. 32. l. 1. p. 49. l. 6. p. 55. l. 27. p. 56. l. 23. The Stage Beaux toss'd in a Blanket, Prologue, page 2. line 15. The Stage Coach, page 1. line 4. p. 2. l. 6. p. 16. l. 19. p. 21. l. antepenult. p. 26. l. 16. The Tender Husband, page 29. line 18. p. 58. l. 21. Ulysses, page 46. line 5, 29 and 32. Zelmaue, page 5. line 14. p. 32. l. antepenult.

I shall only observe, that in the Plays Printed in the Years 1704, and 1705, until the tenth Day of March last, there are near Fourteen Hundred Instances of Swearing, Cursing and Blasphemy:

G

These

These *Plays* are first acted several Times near the City of *London*, and afterward by the other Emissaries, who wander through the Nation for this Purpose. The *Play-Houses* near *London* act several Nights in each Week, especially in the Winter Season, before a great Concourse of People. A Thousand of these *Plays* are afterward Printed to propagate their *Profaneness*. Now as Men are the most apt of all living Creatures to imitate each other in that which is Evil, and in that especially which is proposed as a Diversion, and the Fashion of the Age; so the *Reader* may judge what a Deluge of *Impiety* flows from these Fountains, sufficient, without an interposing Providence, to overflow the Nation, destroy the Vitals of Religion, and provoke God to turn his Mercies into Judgments. To prevent the ill Consequence hereof, let us pray to God, like *David*, [†] *Tho' they curse,* yet blest thou: And thus let us [*] stand in the gap, to turn away his wrathful indignation, that we perish not.

[†] *Psal.* 109.
28.

[*] *Psal.* 106.
33.

C H A P. IV.

*Religion undermin'd and the Scriptures
burlesqu'd by the Stage.*

IT is easy to prove from the Instances of *Swearing, Cursing* and *Blasphemy* mention'd in the former Chapters, that the Design of the present *Stage* is to undermine *Religion*, and render both the sacred Majesty of *God* and his Judgments contemptible; but leaving the *Reader* to make his own *Reflections* hereon, I shall proceed to other Particulars, which have the same Tendency.

First therefore, That the *Players* may strike effectually at the Root of all *Religion*, they represent all *Preachers* to it, as the most *wicked* Persons upon Earth, and scruple nothing which may serve to blacken their Character. They tell us such are notoriously guilty of (a) *Lying*, (b) *Abusing their Apprentices*, (c) made up of *Religion* and *Pride*, (d) will not touch *Card*, for Fear of the *Devil*, and yet are always *swearing, cursing* and *hectoring*.

(a) An Act at Oxford, page 9. line 33.

(b) An Act at Oxford, page 12, line penult.

(c) An Act at Oxford, page 42, line 12. Hampstead Heath, page 47, line 5.

(d) An Act at Oxford, and Hampstead Heath, *ibid.*

(e) An Act
at Oxford,
and Hamp-
stead Heath,
ibid.

(f) Love
at first Sight,
page 19, line
35.

(g) Love
at first Sight,
page 48, line
24. The
Stage Beaux
tois'd in a
Blanket, p.
ult. in fine.

(h) Gibralt-
ar, page 8,
line 19. The
Portsmouth
Heiress, page
6, line 4.
The Roving
Husband
reclaim'd,
page 13, line
10.

(i) The Ro-
ving Hus-
band, re-
claim'd, p.
59, line 7.

(k) The British Enchanters, page 30, line 30.

(l) The Stage Beaux tois'd in a Blanket, Prologue
page 2, line 15.

(m) Solon, page 26, line 31. The Basset Table, page
line 8. p. 48, l. 10. The Rival Brothers, Epilogue in fine

ring in the Family. *The Noise of such an
House, say the Actors, is (e) a perfect
Nuisance, for the whole Family are either
swearing, or singing of Psalms.* Certainly

they who pray and sing Hymns to the
Devil, are offended because others pray
to God, and sing Psalms to his Glory;
and therefore they expose the one, that

they may the better establish the other.

In one Comedy (f) an Actor tells a
nother, that such a Person *prays* much
to which this Answer is immediately
return'd, *That's a bad Sign, A Religion*

*Cloak is the best Covert for Infirmi-
ties.* Other Instances (g) of the same

Nature might be added, if these were
not sufficient. I pray God to deliver

us in his due Time from such Bla-
phemous Language, but now (h) Re-

ligion is represented as a Cloak for
wickedness, (i) God is describ'd as

the Author of Sin, particularly of
adultery, and (k) the Devil as one who

assists us in our just Designs. (l)

The Zeal to save Souls is curs'd, (m)

Preaching the Word of God exposes

all (o) that is spoken by a Man full
of Intreagues seems like a Sermon,
say, (p) the very Reading of a Sermon
in private, is as bad as Reading of a
Bill for Many, when there is nothing
to pay it. (q) Heav'n, Paradise and
Immortal Joys are debased into an A-
mour to be enjoy'd in this Life; and
accordingly, the Religion of the Players
is sunk a Degree lower than that of
Mahomet. When they speak of the
immortality of the Soul, they speak
like Atheists; but when they speak
of Enjoyments below, they speak like
Devils. Rhoderique the King speaks
on one Occasion, (r)

(o) The
Tender Hus-
band, page
25, line 29.
(p) The
Confederacy,
page 11. line
27.

(q) Gibralt-
tar, page 49,
Sheet H. line
27. Liber-
ty asserted,
page 26, line
29. p. 39, l.
15. p. 40. l.
11. p. 49, l. 30.
Love at first
Sight, page
27, line 7.
p. 52, l. 18.

The Con-
quest of
Spain, page
54, line 37.
The British
Enchanters,
page 14, line
2. p. 35, line
3. The
Loyal Sub-
ject, page 44.
The Portsmouth

Who can resolve me what's beyond this
Span?

Perhaps I may return to my first nothing.

and Frontenac Governour of New France
speaks on the other, (s)

I am a God if nothing intervene,

To interrupt this more than mortal Joy.

line 18. The Mistake, page 36, line 26. The
Jeirefs, page 11. line 5.

(r) The Conquest of Spain, page 66, line 22.

(s) Liberty Asserted, page 65, line 1.

(1) The Faithful General, page 32, line 46. In one Comedy (t) *Heav'n* is represented as not worth the Abiding there with an Enemy; in (u) another *Ever-*

(u) *Ulysses*, page 36, line 4. *lasting Rest* is describ'd by *sinking* into the Grave, and never Thinking again. In another (x) an Actor tells a Story notoriously

(x) The Lawyers Fortune, page 14, line 2. false, and add's, *As I hope to be sav'd 'tis true.* Some Suiters going from their Mistresses call it (y) their *Ever-*

(y) The Gamester, page 60, line 4. *lasting Leave*, and bid them (z) eternally adieu, and another (a) speaks

(z) The Gamester, page 67, line 1. fully on this Occasion.

(a) The British Enchanters, page 7, line 29. *So much, so tenderly, your Slave adores. He hath no Thought of happiness but yours.*

(b) An Act at Oxford, page 29, line 30. Besides, The Torment of Hell (b) made a Jest of, in Words too scandalous to be related, and whilst the Devils believe and tremble, the Actor ridicule it. A Damn'd Play is such

17. The Amorous Miser, page 15, line 20. one as hath not Profaneness enough in it to please the Hearers, and this is an Epithet which they also use on other

The Confederacy, page 55, line 16. (c) Occasions. What all this tends to except the utter extinguishing all Nations of future Rewards and Punishments

The Loyal Subject, page 31, line antepenult.

(c) The Stage Beaux tois'd in a Blanket, Prologue, page 3, line 6. p. 13, l. 18. The Lying Lover, page 20, line

ment

ments, I cannot imagine. Perhaps this Apprehension may keep People from the Play-House, and therefore they must remove the Stumbling-Block out of the Way.

To do this more effectually, they undervalue that God who doth reward and punish; not only in such Expressions as these,

(d) You alone [a Lady's waiting Gentlewoman] can help to ease my Pain. (d) Arline, page 7, line 2.

(e) All other Losses I can bear; For he alone [a Lover] is worth my Care. (e) Arline, page 25, in fine.

(f) Chiefly do I owe my Preservation to Mars my Guardian God. (f) Fortune in her Wits, page 17, line 6.

but in (g) another Comedy his Mercy is droll'd upon, and urged as an Argument for our Security in Sin: And in others his inestimable Love in the

Redemption of the World by Christ Jesus is ridicul'd, and the Offices of our Blessed Saviour strangely undervalued. A General is saluted with

(b) All hail Triumpher, Saviour of the State, Cupid (i) is represented as a Mediator between Man and Wife, like

(b) The Faithful General, page 3, line 30. (i) The Portsmouth Heiress, page ult, line 24.

Christ

The Scriptures burlesqu'd

Christ between *God* and *Man*, and the Word *Mediator* printed at large in a different Character, that it may be the more taken Notice of. One asks (k) *Must I go into that nasty Hole which I call'd by way of Joke the Gate of Hell?* And the Answer is immediately return'd, *Even thither until you are redeem'd.* The *Actors* tells us that (l) *Play Mony is a sacred thing, and not to be profaned*, and I wish they would observe the same Rule in such things as relate to *God*, the *Scriptures* and *Religion*.

(k) *Fortune in her Wits*, page 20, line 26.
(l) *The Confederacy*, page 15, line 32.

I doubt I shall be too tedious in Representing their *horrid* Burlesquing of the *Holy Scriptures*, and therefore I shall omit such Passages as have been already taken Notice of, and only touch upon some others. To make sure Work of the whole; (m) when an *Actor* tells a most notorious Lye, it is with this Asseveration that *it is as true as the Gospel*.

(m) *Squire Trelooby*, page 40, line 17.

But to be more Particular.

(n) *Gen.* The *Scripture* tells us, that (n) *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth* The *Actors* (o) ridicule the Word *Creature* as if they believed no such thing, but that either the World was eternal

1. 1.
(o) *The Tender Husband*, page 20, line 25.

eternal or made by an accidental Con-
course of *Atoms*. *Creature! What!*
your own Cousin a Creature! What!--- a
Creature! nay, now I am sure you are
ignorant.

The Scripture tells us, that (p) the
Serpent, or the Devil, *was more subtil*
than any beast of the earth, which the
Lord had made, and that he continues
a cunning Adversary with various
Wiles and Devices; an Actor (q) tells
a Woman, *Sure the Serpent parted with*
his Subtilty, and clos'd in the Fruit he
gave thy Sex.

(p) Gen. 3.

(q) The
Portsmouth,
Heirels, page
70, line 1.

The Scripture tells us (r) that God
open'd the mouth of Balaam's ass; the
Players burlesque the Story, *An (s)*
Ass hath spoken at a less Injury than
this.

(r) Numbs
22. 28.

(s) The
Portsmouth,
Heirels, page
47, line 28.

In the Scripture, God (t) positively
forbids *the woman to wear that which*
appertaineth to a man, and also *the*
man to put on a womans apparel, and
gives this Reason, *for all that do so*
are an abomination to the Lord. The
Players often transgress this Command
for the sake of the Jest, where some-
times (u) Women, and sometimes (x)
Men are guilty in this Particular.

(t) Deut.

22. 5.
(u) Gri-
braltar, page
44, Sheet F.
line 32 & 55.
Sheet G. line
1. 3. The
Gamester, pa.
53, line 15.
The Mistake,
Dramatis Per-
sonæ Women
line 2. The
Tender Hus-

band, *Dramatis Personæ, Fairlove fere p r totum.*

(x) Gibraltar, page 47, Sheet F. line 2. Squire Trelcoby, page 47.

In;

The Scriptures burlesqu'd

In Scripture, David speaking of his
 (1) 1 Kings Death as near, saith (y) *I go the way*
 2. 2. of all the earth. This Text in the
 [z] The Play-House is [z] ridiculously applied to
 Stage Coach, carnal Copulation.
 page 12. line
 21.

(a) Psal. In the Scripture, David saith (a) *I*
 139. 14. will praise thee, O God, for I am fear-
 (b) The Fe- fully and wonderfully made; marvellous
 male Wits, are thy works, and that my soul know-
 page 62, line eth right well; the Players express it
 16. thus (b) *The blind Work of Chance which*
produced a Monster.

(c) Eccles In Scripture, Solomon tells us (c)
 3. 1. that *To every thing there is a season, and*
time for every purpose under the sun;
 this Expression the Players repeat, and
 (d) Gibral- make a *Blasphemous Inference*, that (d)
 121, page 39, therefore *a Bottle is good in the Even-*
 Sheet E. line ing, and *a Whore doth well in the Morn-*
 37. ing.

These are excellent Comments on
 [e] Matth. the *Old Testament*, and upon Enquiry
 3. 2 and 4. we shall find that the *New* fares no
 17. Mark better.
 1. 15 and 6.

12. Luke 13. In the *New Testament* we are often
 3. Acts 2. commanded, to [e] *repent* and turn
 38 and 3. 19 from Sin that we may be fit for the
 and 17. 30. Promises of the Gospel. The Players
 and 26. 20. tell us, that this is not worth our
 [f] Gi- while, and that he who [f] marries,
 braltar, page that
 38, Sheet E.
 line 7.

that he may afterward live honest, makes a bad Bargain, since he purchaseth a short Pleasure, with a long Repentance, and the loss of Liberty.

Our Blessed Saviour [b] is very particular in forbidding us to commit Adultery, saying that to this end we should avoid every Provocation thereto; for he who looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart: But if we should have such Inclinations, tho' they are as dear to us as an Eye or a Foot, yet he commands us to part with them under the Penalty of Hell Fire. The Playerstell us, if we have a lustful Thought, we may go on to the utmost. (i) (i) Gibraltar, For, they say, what signifies a Woman's page 3. line 34: being Chast in the Flesh if she is a Whore in her Spirit: And to what Purpose is it to keep her self from the World, if she has suffer'd her self beforehand to be debauch'd by the Devil?

Our Blessed Saviour exhorts us (k) (k) Matth. 7: that whatsoever we would that men 12. should do to us, we should do so to them; this Text is used by the Players (l) (l) Gibraltar, in Vindication of Adultery. page 16. line 14.

Our Blessed Saviour (m) saith in (m) Matth. Matters of Religion there must be no 12. 30. Neutrality.

(n) The Amorous Miser,
page 53. line 25.

(o) Matth. 22.
21.

(p) The Portsmouth Heirels,
page 19. line 14.

(q) Luke 16.
21.

(q) Luke 16.
23.

(s) The Roving Husband Re-claim'd,
page 32. line 16.

(t) The Amorous Miser,
page 12. line 24.

Neutrality. The Players jest with this Expression. (n) *He, faith one in a Captain's Habit, that is not for us is against us, therefore plunder.*

Our Blessed Saviour (o) commands us to render unto Cesar the things which are Cesar's, and unto God the things which are God's; this Text is applied by the Stage to encourage Whoring. It is but laying the Child to the right Father. But, (p) faith an Actress, *if I receive their Flames, what if I should grow soft upon it, and receive a dangerous Impression?* To this it is answered, *Why then you must be render'd to the Man whose Image you bear,* concluding with an Exhortation to fear nothing.

Our Blessed Saviour (q) tells us a Parable of Lazarus, that *he desired to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table,* and was afterwards carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. To ridicule the first

Expression. (s) *What, faith an Actor, would those poor Ladies that are confin'd at Court, give for the Crumbs of Lovers that sigh and fall from your Table?* And to undervalue the other, (t) *Shall she [a Maiden] lie in the Arms of such an enervate*

enervate Cripple? She had better lie in Abraham's Bosom.

This is the Interpretation of our Saviour's Words; and since it is enough for the disciple that he is as his master, we may expect to find more of this Language; and indeed it is remarkable that not one Apostle escapes them.

To begin with St. Paul. He argues (t) very seriously. *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid! How shall we that are dead unto sin live any longer therein?* The Language of the (u) Stage is thus: *Such a Kindness would encourage us to sin again. [Ans.] And if it should!— [Reply.] 'Twould give Occasion for the pleasing Exercise of Mercy. [Ans.] Right! And so we act the part of Heaven and Earth together, and tast of both their Pleasures. Here Sin is commended, and the Mercy of God is droll'd upon, being made an Occasion of our Security. It is the Pleasure of Men, in the Play-House Language, not to be Religious, but to run on in Sin, after Oaths and Vows to the contrary; and the Pleasure of God to pardon such presumptuous Sinners.*

(t) Rom.
6. 1, 2.

(u) The Mi-
stake, page 44,
line 15.

St. Paul

(x) 2 Cor.
10. 2, 3, 4, 5.

St. Paul (x) is very warm against such as slandered the Apostles, that they walked according to the flesh, and saith, For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh. An Actor saith upon the Stage, (y) I am Flesh as well as Spirit, and my Body must have some Conversation [spoken of Whoring] as well as my Soul.

(y) Gibraltar, Sheet E
page 36. line 28.

(z) 1 Tim. 4.
4.

St. Paul (z) saith, Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving. For it is sanctified by the word of God, and by prayer. The Play-House expounds it thus, (a) Every Creature of God is good. Every thing is good in its Kind, Cards are harmless Bits of Paper; Dice insipid Bones, and Women were made for Men.

(a) The Banquet Table,
page 48. line 17.

(b) Hebrews
13. 4.

The Apostle tells us also (b) that Marriage is honourable among all men, and the bed undefiled, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge: And that

(c) 1 Cor.
7. 2, 9.

(c) Marriage was appointed by God, as a Means to avoid Fornication. For this Reason, the Actors render it as dishonourable as they can; complain of God's Providence in this Particular, expose it by all the ridiculous Similitudes, and render it the unhappiest State in the World

World. I have not said half which may be observed from (d) the Quotations in the Margin, which would fill several Pages upon Occasion. In short, *Marriage* is a Means to prevent *Whoring*, for which Reason they so exclaim against it: And since *God* calls it Honourable, therefore they endeavour to render it *Contemptible*: *Whores* in the *Scripture* are accounted (e) abominable; but according to (f) the *Play-House Language*, they should expect greater Privileges than *Married Women*.

(d) An Act at Oxford, page 140 line 12. p 20. l 11. p 54. l 4. Fortune in her Wits, page 50. line penult. Gibraltar, page 3. line 3. Sheet E p 38. l 6. p 58. l 33. Hampstead Heath, page 16. line 29. p 22. l 22. Love at first Sight, page 1. line 1. p 6. l

33. p 49. l 4. Love the Leveller, page 17. line 19. The Careless Husband, page 18. line 7 and 33. p 20. l 30. p 52. l 23. The Cares of Love, page 3. line 24. p 48. l 5 and 13. The Confederacy, page 25. line 33, to the End; and p 26, from line 1, to line 33. The British Enchanters, page 28. line 7. The Gamester, Epilogue, line 5. The Lawyer's Fortune, page 63. line 17. The Portsmouth Heiress, page 9. line 30. p 31. l 5. p ult. l 22.

(e) Deut. 23. 17, 18.

(f) The Careless Husband, page 2. line 37. p 4. l 3.

As for their Comment on (g) St. (h) Chap. 4. James, I have (b) already insisted on (b) Page 40. it, and it needs no Repetition.

St. Peter tells us also of the Devil

(i) that he goeth about seeking whom (i) 1 Peter 5. he may devour; This in the *Play-House* 8.

is (k) applied to an Actor, with very (k) The Biter, little Alteration, and serves for a pro- page 52. line 10. fane Jest, tho' I doubt there is too much Truth in it.

St. John

(l) 1 John 1.

(m) The Fair

Example, pa.

64, line 33.

St. John also (l) informs us, that
If we say we have no sin, we deceive our
selves, and the truth is not in us. In a late

(m) Comedy, Symons being catechiz'd,
What Sins he had been guilty of which
had drawn a Judgment upon him, makes
this Answer, None, Sir, none, I never
committed any Sin in my Life; and af-
ter Examination having own'd him-
self guilty of Cheating, Lying, Betray-
ing a Trust, and Aspersing his Neigh-
bour, he was again ask'd (n) Are these

(n) Page 65,
line 11.

no Sins? To which he readily answers,
Why no! I have been told, that nothing is a
Sin but Swearing and Sabbath-Breaking.
Whether the Actors are guilty of the
latter of these Crimes, I shall not de-
termine, but I am sure they are scan-
dalously guilty of the former. Be-
sides, what Wit our English Poets shew
in such Expressions as these, I cannot
imagine; since a wiser Man than them
hath plainly told us, that (o) they
are Fools who thus make a mock at sin.

(o) Prov. 14.
9.

(p) Verse 6.

St. Jude tells us (p) that as for
the Angels which kept not their first estate,
but left their own habitation, God reserved
them under chains of darkness to the
judgment of the great day: He turn'd
them into Devils, In a late Comedy

a (r) fine *Lady* declares her *Chastity*, that *She did not deal altogether so much in the Flesh*; to which the profane Spark, endeavouring to debauch her, makes this Answer; *Nay, now thou talk'st like a fallen Angel, repining at the Loss of Paradise*. A pretty Compliment to his Mistress, to compare her to the *Devil*! A fine Description of *Paradise*, to resemble it to a *Whoring Intrigue*! And an excellent Occasion to burlesque the *Scriptures*!

(r) The
Portsmouth
Heirefs, page
11. line 6.

*From hardness of Heart and contempt
of thy Word and Commandment, Good
Lord deliver us.*

These *Pills* are very good Preparatives to the following Design, and when the *Stage-Patients* can swallow them, the next thing is to ridicule *Devotion* in general. They first expose the Principles of *Revealed*, and then of *Natural Religion*. Some of the *Heathens* opposed *Plays*, as things of pernicious Consequence; and therefore the *Players* think their Cause will not do well, until they can sink *Christianity* a Degree below *Paganism*; and then Men will be *Lovers of Pleasure more than*

H

than

(s) An Act
at Oxford,
page 17. line
26. Gibral-
tar. Sheet E
page 38. line
1. Hampstead
Heath, page
20. line 1.
Love at first
Sight, page
24. line 23. P
49. in fine.
Squire Treloo-
by, Prologue,
line 3. The
Basset Table,
page 9. line
15. p 46. 17.
The Lawyer's
Fortune, page
45. Signature
G 3 line 8.

than Lovers of God. They strive to
stifle Conscience, destroy all Notions of
God and Judgment, Heaven and Hell,
Good and Evil, and banish whatsoever
hath a Tendency to grave and serious
Thoughts. Many (s) Instances of this
Nature may be produced, fitter for the
Hands of a Common Hangman than the
Publick View; and therefore I must
beg the Reader's Pardon for producing
some, that he may the better guess at
the rest.

Fortune in her Wits, p. 34. l. 27.

What? Is the Sot grown Religious?
Sirrah, I shall be ashamed of you, and
disown you, if I find any more of these
Conscientious Qualms.

The Fair Example, p. 10. l. 5.

What an unpolished thing was I before?
On a Sunday in the Afternoon, not a
Card, not a Dice, no Diversion; and for
the Evening, that, Forsooth, must be
spent in Roasting Apples, a long Chapter,
&c.

The Inference from hence, naturally
follows, That since Religion is a scandal-
lous

ious Thing, a dull, heavy Employment, and in short, a Cheat; therefore we must down with it, let the *Professors* be of what *Perswasion* soever. The *Stage Beaux* toss'd in a *Blanket* hath a *Prologue* exactly calculated for this Purpose from the Beginning to the End; wherein he scourgeth in their Turns, all Pretenders to *Religion*, *Zeal* and *Honesty*; but particularly vents his Spleen against all *Preachers*, let them belong either to the *Church* or *Dissenters*; and for this Purpose, the *Speaker* is dress'd in a ridiculous Habit, one half like a *Minister* of the *Church of England*, and the other half like a *Dissenting Teacher*, and sometimes points to one Side, sometimes to the other, representing both as the greatest Villains in Nature. Indeed the *Title Page* tells us that the *Prologue* is against *Occasional Conformity*; but if it did not, no one who reads the *Prologue* could believe it, unless in this Sence; They would have Men totally abstain from both, and therefore reflect on such as on any Occasion resort to either.

But the *Church of England* seems to be the chief Mark at which they aim, and therefore they frequently make the

(t) Gibraltar, Sheet E page 36. line 34.
The Fort-
mouth Heirefs
page 10. line
24. p 49. l 13.

(u) Gibraltar, page 3. l. 3.
(x) Gibraltar, Sheet E page 38. line 7.

(y) An Act at
Oxford, page
11. line ult. p
17. l 27.

Hampstead
Heath, page
15. line 13.

(z) The Care-
le's Husband,
page 5. line 9.

(a) The Care-
le's Husband,
page 6. line
12.

(b) The Ro-
ving Husband
Reclaim'd,
page 23. line
26.

Expressions in the sacred Office of (t) Baptism, the Subject of their Pastime. Nay, they who declare, that they renounce all Women, except one, as heartily as ever they renounced the Devil, explain their meaning in other Places of the same Play, lest they should be supposed really to renounce the Devil; That (u) none but Madmen are in love with one particular Object, and that (x) Marriage and Constancy is a purchasing of long Repentance with the Expence of Liberty. This is the same in Effect, as if they had said, 'Tis true, in their Baptismal Vow they renounced the Devil, but it was never done heartily; at best, it was a mad Trick, it might have cost them their Liberty, and they are sorry for it ever since.

Neither is it one particular Office, but all who frequent the Church, especially on Week-Days, Plays being then acted, are (y) Censur'd and Ridicul'd. In one Comedy (z), a Lady saith, She is going to Church; From whence this Observation is (a) afterward made, I know, Women of your Principles have more Pride than those who have no Principles at all. In (b) another, there is this Expression; The Church! I scorn your Words, Sir, I deal in no such Cat-

tle, I want no Luck in Horse Flesh.
 To which this Answer is return'd;
I like your Cause the better, for not
having to do with the Church.

To conclude this Chapter, I shall only observe, That the Design of the Play-House is to promote *Atheism* in the World. For this Purpose they speak their Minds freely on some Occasions. Thus an Actor tells us his own Religion. *I seldom trouble the Gods, except it be to swear by them;* and that *(d) the Wits indeed were Atheists in old Times, and they were brave Examples, for Men to follow;* with other *(e)* Sentences to the same Purpose.

(c) Love the Leveller, page 5. line 6.

(d) Love at first sight, page 9. line 3.

(e) The Amorous Miser, page 9. line 22. The Loyal Subject, page 44. line 18.

But if they cannot prevail to make Men *Atheists*, they have another Card to play, which is to make them *Hypocrites*. Either *Method* may ruin their Souls, and gratify the Devil. 'Tis true indeed, sometimes the Stage exclaims against *Hypocrites*; but then they only mean such as endeavour to suppress *Profaneness* and *Debauchery*, or such as write against, or would reform the Play-House. These are horrid and dreadful Evils in their Opinion. But a bare Shew of *Religion*, when the Heart is set on other Things is among them.

(f) Page 5.
line penult.

rather esteem'd as a *Virtue*. In the *Portsmouth Heiress*, Captain Rainer is the principal Man of *Figure* throughout the whole *Play*, the *Drama* saith, he is *free and well bred*; and in the End he Marries, *L' Bell*, the principal Woman, and great Fortune, from whence the *Play* took its Name, and therefore what (f) he saith is the more material, which I shall set down at large.

In the old Remains of Truth, *Improbability* and *Hypocrisy* are painted the darling Principles of the *Fortunate*. A *dissembled Virtue*, like a *dissembled Passion*, hath commonly the best Effect. *Gravity* and *affected Zeal* grow farther in the Eye of the World than *Sincerity* and *plain Dealing*; and were I to rong a Man in his Estate, or a Woman in her Honour, it should be still under the *Hypocritical Cant* of *Devotion*. To this it is answer'd; A pretty Religion you profess, truly! And he immediately replies, Religion! Ay, there's another Topick now! Religion and Reformation! Prithee what hath Religion to do with a Man of Figure? Conscience resides among poor Rogues; Men of Quality are above it.

The

The *Greek Tragedians* speak honourably of their *Gods*, which was commendable in them, because they knew no other; they endeavour to instil into their *Hearers* the *Notions* of *Natural Religion*: And therefore, I wish our *Poets* would imitate these *Heathens*; since the *Attempts* for their *Reformation* cannot prevail upon them to write like *Christians*.

CHAP. V.

*The Doctrines of Christianity misapplied
by the Stage.*

(a) Gibraltar, page 3.
line 1. Love the Leveller, page 5. line 6. Squire Trelooby, page 20. line 1 and antepenult. p 21. 110. The Mistake, page 57. Signature 1 line 9.
(b) Love at first Sight, page 49. line 11. The Female Wits, page 61. line 12. The Mistake, page 28. line 25.
(c) Fortune in her Wits, page 27, line 30. Gibraltar, Sheet F. page 44, line 30 and 36. The Roving Husband reclaim'd, page 8, line 21.

IT cannot be supposed that they who thus endeavour to undermine Religion, pervert and burlesque the Scriptures, and turn the most serious Parts of them into *profane Jests*, will behave themselves in a Different Manner, when they speak of those Truths which we are taught thereby. If the Poets are willing to be merry in their Comedies, let them take other Subjects for the Matter of their Jests. Religion and the Scriptures require our serious Thoughts. It is ill *Jesting* with (a) God, (b) Death, (c) and the Devil. God will not be mock'd, Death mocks all Men, and the Devil alone is gratified by such Diversions. However, such Expressions as these must be spoken on the Stage, to make the Hearers laugh, and the Subject ridiculous. It would certainly be a greater Reputation to the Poet, in the Choice of his Words, to avoid all such Sayings

as bring *Religion* into Contempt, and cause the *Actors* to speak worse than *Heathens*. But since they scruple no *Blasphemy*, rather than loose a *Fancy*, and since they complain, that [d] the Denying them this *Liberty*, will Rob them of all their *Life* and *Pert-ness*; I hope, they will remember, that *It is ill festing with Serious Things*. It will leave an ill Impression on the Minds of the *Hearers* - And for such *idle Words*, there must be a serious account on the day of judgment. If they cannot write, but they must write *profanely*, they had much better not write at all. If they cannot bear a *due Correction*, they justly deserve a *total Suppression*. And it is high Time to abolish the *Play-Houses*, since they *profane the Name of God*, and *expose Religion* in so publick a Manner.

(d) The
Portsmouth
Heire's, Pre-
face line 4.

The Sum of the *Christian Religion*, contain'd in the *Holy Scriptures*, are usually reduced to two Heads, namely, *Doctrine* and *Precept*; The *Precepts* are either *positive*, commanding *Virtue*, or *negative*, forbidding *Vice*. If then the *Stage* misapplies the *Doctrines of Christianity*, if it *exposes Virtue*, and if it *encourages Vice*; then it is evident, that

The Doctrines of Christianity

that it directly exposes the whole Design of the *Scripture* and the *Christian Religion*.

For a Proof, that the *Doctrines of Christianity* are misapplied by the Stage, I shall only produce some *Quotations*, and leave them to the Consideration of the Reader.

[e] The Bitter, page 5.
line 23.

[f] The Cares of Love, page 10, line 34.

[g] Solon, page 26. line 31.

First, The Notion of *Grace* is strangely misapplied. In [e] one *Comedy*, the utmost Perfection thereof is lodg'd in an *affected, amorous, old Widow*. In [f] another, *Chastity* is expos'd as a Want of *Grace*. In [g] another *Play*, *Phædra* reads her Husband a *Lesson* of Obedience to her, and gives him several Directions for this Purpose, and then concludes thus; *Be sure, remember what hath been said, and may Juno give you Grace to apply it aright. Here Preaching* is ridicul'd, the *Honour* due to God given to a *Pagan Deity*, and the Notion of *Grace* expos'd; so that there is a triple Discharge against *Religion* in a single Sentence.

[h] The Bitter, page 7.
line 30.

Secondly, The Doctrine of *Predestination* is misapplied. [h] *This*, saith an Actor, *is the very Predestination of good Fortune*; spoken of an accidental Meeting on the Stage. In the *Articles*

of the Church of England, *Predestination* is [i] describ'd as an Act of God's Providence, and it ought not therefore to be ascrib'd to any other. [k]

[i] Article

17.

[k] Juvenal,

Satyr 10. ver.

penult.

Sed te Nos facimus, Fortuna,

Deam, cœloq; locamus. — But now, *Fortune*

is a Goddess, she is plac'd in *Heav'n*,

and the Word *Predestination* is applied

to the paltry Concerns of the Stage.

Thirdly, The Doctrine of God's Providence

is as strangely misapplied. In

[l] one Play, an Actor speaking of an

Intrigue for *Adultery*, and perswa-

ding the Husband with a Bribe to con-

sent, makes this Inference; *See, there's*

a Providence in it, which nothing can

resist. Another [m] also speaking of

Lust in a married Woman, to com-

mit *Adultery*, softens it with the Name

of *Love*, and saith, *He that creates*

Love, if it was so bad a thing, no doubt

he would prevent it. Here God is

blam'd for our Miscarriages, and the

Fault laid on him but not on our

selves. When our first Parents sinn'd,

Adam laid the Blame upon *Eve*, and

Eve upon the *Devil*, and neither of

them durst lay the Blame upon God:

But here it is remarkable, That tho'

each of these did wickedly, yet in this

Respect

[l] Love the

Leveller, page

8. line 12.

[m] The Ro-

ving Husband

Reclaim'd,

page 19. line

penult.

[n] The Ro-
ving Husband
Reclaim'd,
page 59. line 7.

Respect, our present Stage exceeds them all. Nay, The same Comedy in [n] another place, makes God the Author of our Transgressions, and speaks in the Case of Adultery:

Ne'er think 'tis a Sin; of a Truth I do
know,
'Tis the Will of the Fates, and they will
have it so.

[o] The Mi-
stake, page 44.
line 15.

In [o] another Comedy, Sin is ex-
cus'd, because it gives Occasion for the
pleasing Exercise of Mercy; and thus they
speak of heinous Offences, as if they
had no Notion of Good and Evil,

(p) The Bas-
set Table, page
38. line ult.

(q) Love's,
Contrivance,
printed 1703.
page 55. line 1.

But then, to make a farther Jest of
this Matter, they apply the Notion of
of Sin to such things, as are trifling
and insignificant. An Actor (p) speak-
ing to some who laugh at a ridiculous
Letter saith, I warrant Heaven will
punish you all: And another (q) cries
out in a Passion. Is it not an horrible
thing; a thing that cries to Heaven for
Vengeance, that it should be said publick-
ly, The Form of an Hat? I affirm they
should say, The Figure of an Hat, and
not The Form. Thus trifling Matters
must be gross Sins, and gross Sins
must be nothing at all.

To this I shall only add, That they represent themselves and others as absolutely perfect, and guilty of no Sin at all. One [r] speaks of himself, *that he never committed any Sin in his Life*, and puts it off with a Jest, rather to be lamented than laugh'd at: And [s] another speaks of his *Mistress*. [r] The Fair Example, page 64, line 33. [s] The British Enchanters, page 15, line 13.

The faultless Form no secret Stains disgrace,

A Beauteous Mind, unblemish'd as her Face.

*Not Painted and Adorn'd to varnish Sin;
Without, all Goodness; all Divine within.*

By Truth maintaining what by Love she got,

A Heaven without a Cloud, a Sun without a Spot,

The Scriptures tell us, That [t] [t] 2 Pet. 2. 1, 2. there should be some, *who privily bring in damnable heresies, and bring upon themselves swift destruction; and that many shall follow their own pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.* We ought therefore to be very cautious in admitting such Rhetorick and Diversion, since we know not the Consequence

The Doctrines of Christianity, &c.

quence thereof ; and have great Reason to joyn with the Church in this Petition :

From all false Doctrine, Heresy and Schism, Good Lord Deliver us.

CHAP.

CHAP VI.

Virtue expos'd by the Stage

FROM the *Doctrines* taught upon the *Stage*, I shall proceed to their *Precepts*; and as I have already spoken of their *Swearing*, *Cursing*, *Blasphemy*, and their undermining of *Religion*; so I shall take no farther Notice of the *Duties* and *Sins*, which refer immediately to *God*, but only of such, as relate to our *selves* and our *Neighbours*.

Tho' the *Heathens* were led only by the *Light of Nature*; yet both the *Greeks* and *Latins* wrote very excellently upon *Moral Subjects*. When *God* at first revealed his Will, he gave us the *Ten Commandments* which is called *The Moral Law*, and afterward farther *Exhortations* which were agreeable thereto. When our *Saviour* was upon the *Earth*, he charg'd us, saying, (a) *Think not, that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.* (a) *Matth 5. 17.* The *Apostles* treat on such *Topicks*, as excellently as the *Prophets*; and therefore the *Precepts of Morality* are what *Heathens*,

Heathens, Jews, Turks, and Christians of all Perswasions, are fully agreed in. But the *Language* of the *Play-Houses*, being Peculiar from all the World besides, may be seen in these following Particulars.

First, They represent *Virtue* as nothing, but an Appearance only. He is *Virtuous*, in the *Play-House Language*, who hath a good Reputation; and he is *Vicious*, who is so unfortunate, as to expose himself to Censure. He who is as *Vicious* as the worst, let him keep it private, and in their Opinion he is as *Virtuous* as the best. In (b) one

(b) An Act
at Oxford, pa.
25, line 24.
Hampstead
Heath, page
29, line 3.

Play, an Actor speaking of *Adultery*, saith, *We will be both virtuous, that is, we will be secret, and the World shall never know the contrary.* In another

(c) Love at
first Sight, pa.
59, line 16.

(c) there is much to the same Purpose spoken on the same Subject. *Will these Conscientious Qualms be never reconciled to Love? [that is Adultery. Answer] And if it should be known. [Reply] 'Twould prove a Sin. But if it should not, then you are innocent and virtuous. [Answer] Then Virtue is nothing but a Name. [Reply] What else? She is innocent, who is reputed such, and lewd whom every Body believes to be so.*

In a third there is also (d) this Expression. *What is a Crime to the Wicked, may not be so to the Godly. If you guard well the Appearance, half the Duty of Religion is preserv'd, and you avoid the Scandal. Now the Crime as to Men is none, if not known, and in many reputed Crimes, the Scandal is all the Offence, as particularly, in a private Amour, where there is no Injury. If such Communications do not corrupt good Manners, and such Arguments do not directly tend to confound all Notions of Virtue and Vice, I know not what doth. Besides, We are told, that (e) the Pleasure of Virtue is not so much in the Thing, as in the Reputation of having it; and (f) That there is nothing in that Religion, which debars a Man of his Pleasure. 'Tis well known that the Heathens taught different Morals, and declared, that Man's chief Happiness in this Life, consisted in the Practice of Virtue. The Prophet Isaiah (g) pronounceth an heavy Woe against them, that do but call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter. The Actors render themselves liable to*

(d) The Stage Beaux toss'd in a Blanker, page 57. line 24.

(e) The Careless Husband, page 34. line antepenult.

(f) The Portsmouth Heiress, page 6. line 21.

(g) Chap. 5. 20.

this *Wo.* They ascribe the Name of *Virtue* to *Vice*. *Winking at the Adultery* of an Husband, is stiled (*b*) the most convenient piece of *Virtue*, that ever a *Wife* was *Mistress* of. In (*i*) one *Play*, a notorious *Whore* is publickly convicted before a Mock *Justice* of the *Peace*, who makes this *Apology* for the *Fact*: *She hath committed a little Country Folly*, as she privately confesseth. *What's that!* It may stand in *Rank* with what they call *Virtue* here. I hope there will be no *Danger* in exposing the *Poison*, and therefore I shall add some other *Quotations*.

(*b*) The Careless Husband, page 6. line 33.

(*i*) The Northern Lass, page 46. line antepenult.

(*k*) Fortune in her Wits, page 50. line 3.

(*l*) Love at first Sight. page 8. line 17.

(*m*) Love the Leveller, page 22. line 6.

(*n*) Love the Leveller, page 22. line 12.

(*o*) The Careless Husband, page 6. line 4.

(*p*) The Careless Husband, page 19. line 9.

(*k*) *Virtue! Can you feed upon it?*

(*l*) *Some Virtuous Devil.*

(*m*) *Virtue! with a Pox to't.*

(*n*) *To lose Money, and long of this Virtue [with an Oath] I wonder how this Virtue crept into my House; I am sure I never gave it any Encouragement.*

(*o*) *What good hath your Virtue done you?*

(*p*) *Virtues in a Wife, are good for nothing, but to make her Proud, and*

put the World in mind of her Husband's Faults.

(q) I think, as the World goes, they may be proud of marrying their Daughter into a Virtuous Family. To this it is answer'd, with an Oath: *Vartue* is not the Case; and when it was reply'd, Where she may have a good Example before her Eyes, this Expression was farther expos'd by drolling upon the Name of God.

(q) The Confederacy, page 32. line 35.

The Last Expressions which I shall mention, are spoken by a Gentleman (r) of good Breeding, and who makes an honourable Exit by marrying the great Fortune in the Play. I must confess, his Sentences are remarkable. (s) Give me as much Pleasure, I say, as my Constitution requires; as much Wit and Sincerity as will qualify me for Company; and as much Morality as will secure me from the Talons of the Law, and let Fortune take her Choice. And (t) a little after, Urge your Virtue to a Courtier, and he'll receive you as a young Lord do's a begging Relation. Urge your Virtue to a Lawyer, and you may plead your Cause your self. Urge your Virtue to

(r) The Portsmouth Heiress, Rainer in the Drama.

(s) Page 5. line 13.

(t) Page 5. line 23.

a Woman, and she'll enquire into your Estate. In short, Virtue is like a Man's Coat of Arms, of no Value to any but himself, and he that depends to rise by that one Quality alone, may e'en be reduced to starve with his Mistress. To this it is answer'd; Excellent Satyr this! Prithee where hast thou learnt it? And he immediately replies; From the old Remains of Truth, where Improbity and Hypocrisy are painted, the darling Principles of the Fortunate,

(1.) Solon,
page ult. line
antepenult.

Thus the Old Remains of Truth are strangely misrepresented by the Stage to condemn all Morality, and encourage Hypocrisy. Accordingly, in (u) another Comedy, an Antient Philosopher speaks in very different Language from his real Character, and concludes the Play with an Instruction to the Audience from his own Example, viz.

Unpolish'd Morals I'll no longer prize

(x.) Love for
Love, printed
1704. being the
4th Edition.
page 43. line 32

Besides the Arguments mentioned in Scripture, there are two other Motives to Virtue, viz. Honour and Conscience. Mr. Congreve hath given these the joynt Character in a (x) former Comedy. That Honour is a publick Enemy, and

Conscience a domestick Thief; and our late Poets follow this great Example of Reformation. One (y) speaks of Honour; *What is Honour? A noisy Nothing, a stalking Shade; when 'tis lost, no one finds it, and Heaven be prais'd, there's not many look after it now. When they have it, 'tis us'd like their Cloaths, fond of it at first, till they find something they like better, and then 'tis gone with a Fadding.* Another speaks of Conscience, (z) *That it resides among poor Rogues, and Men of Dignity are above it; and in another Place, (a) Conscience, they say, has a Sting, but hath not Love a greater? O yes, Villains can suffer Shame and live after it, but lovers cannot brook Despair.*

(y) The Ro-
ving Husband
Reclaim'd,
page 32. line
22.

(z) The
Portsmouth
Heire's, page
6. line 14.

(a) Page 25.
line 3.

Beside the general Discouragement which the Stage gives to *Virtue*, it will not, I hope, be improper to mention some particular Instances, how they represent those *Virtues* which relate to our selves.

First, The Stage exposeth *Chastity*, sometimes as (b) an *Impossibility*; sometimes as (c) a bare *Fancy*; and sometimes as (d) a *Want of Grace*. The

(b) As you
find it, print-
ed 1703, page
33. line 30.

(c) The Care-
less Husband,
page 34. line
antepenult.

(d) The Cares of Love, page 10. line 34.

(e) The Ro-
ing Husband,
reclaim'd.

page 32, line
22.

(f) The
Cares of Love,
page 10, line
33.

late (e) Expression in general concern-
ing Honour, was particularly meant of
this Virtue. In one (f) Comedy, Lucin-
da saith, *I am called by the Name of her
who was an Example of Chastity.* To
this, it is answer'd; *But I hope you have
more Grace than to let it go farther than
your Name.* Nay, they represent it as
the (*) Sin of Ingratitude. Rather
- *than be tax'd with such a Sin [saith an
Actor] she'll be yours for nothing, at
least for no Money.*

Secondly, The Stage exposeth Prepa-
ration for Death, and another World,
which ought to be the proper Business
of our whole Life.

(g) The
Female Wits,
page 61, line
12.

(h) Love at
first Sight,
page 49, line
11. The Mi-
stake. page 28,
line 25.

(i) Love at
first Sight,
page 43, line 5.

(k) The
Cares of Hus-
band page 28.
line 11.

(g) My Lady dying! *I am not yet
prepar'd to bear her Company. I'll e'en
shift for one. I would not willingly leave
this wicked World, before I have tasted
a little more on't.* Other (h) Quotati-
ons might be added, but I think one
is sufficient.

Thirdly, Fasting is misapplied. (i)
A Man almost Drunk, when he can
have no more Wine brought him, is
represented as Fasting for the Sins of
the Day.

Fourthly, Another speaks of Humility
(k) *What have you to do with it? Will*

you never have enough of it? If Humility is a Fault, the Poets and Actors are seldom guilty, and therefore may I confess more boldly expose it.

Lastly, They expose Modesty and call it (l) a sickly sneaking Virtue.

(l) Solon, Epilogue, page 2. line 10.

I shall now conclude this Chapter with their Notions of such Virtues as relate to our Neighbours.

First, They rail at Honesty, (m) in general, They'd make us honest, that's they'd make us Fools. They rail more particularly at (n) honest Love. What!

(m) The Stage Beaux tofs'd in a Blanket, Prologue, page 2, line 15.

turn'd Chymist in Love? Extracting Patience from the meer Necessity of a Woman's Inconstancy! [with an Oath] That a Man of Sence should be thus Assid and not feel himself gall'd! wilt thou never be wise.

(n) The Portsmouth Heiress, page 47. line 9.

Secondly, They expose Obedience to Parents, especially in the the Case of Love. This is a fine Lesson for young Ladies that frequent them. If (o) he was my Father [faith one] I should take a great Pleasure to plague him. Another (p) faith, My Heart begins to fail me; and asks this Question, shall I resist my Father? To this it is answered, When he resists Nature. Are you to be a Gosling all your Life? Are you not of Age to

(o) The Quacks, page 5. line 1.

(p) The Quacks, page 6. line 19.

be married? And doth he think you are made of Marble? If the Disposal of Children in Marriage is the great Concern of Parents, and that upon which their own Comfort, the Comfort of their Children and the Honour of their Family depends, and if they would have them dutiful in this Respect, they ought to keep them from the Play-House.

By this we may observe how excellently the Stage promotes *Virtue*, and endeavours to reclaim the Age. Let every Man live as they please, be guilty of *Whoring*, be *Drunk*, *Impudent*, and *Shameless*, and never mind either *Death* or *Judgment*; then the *Actors* will thrive, their *Houses* will be full, and (*which God forbid*) they will effect their intended *Reformation*.

C H A P. VII.

Vice encouraged by the Stage.

TO prove that the *Stage* encourages *Vice*, and is also in this respect as equally guilty as in the other, I shall first produce some general Quotations to this Purpose, and leave them to the Consideration of the Reader.

(a) "We ought to sin seasonably, to drink in *Spain*, and whore in *London*, where the Wenches are good and cheap, and the Tax free.

(a) *Gibraltar*,
page 6. line 14.

(b) "Vice, by the Dexterity of our Council, is made the Supporter of Religion and the Laws.

(b) *Gibraltar*,
page 6. line 21.

(c) "For a Look and a Chipk of this [*Mony*] who now a Days would not be a Sinner?

(c) *Gibraltar*,
page 22. line 25.

(d) "I hate to sin like a Porter, that's damnable; but to sin in State, and like a Gentleman, I hope, is venial.

(d) *Love at first Sight*,
page 14. line 15.

(e) "Vice

(e) Love at
first Sight,
page 30. line

23.

(f) The
Portsmouth
Heiress, page
7. line 8.
spoken by the
Well-bred Gen-
man,

(e) "Vice when dress'd by him
[an Actor] hath Charms about her.

(f) "Thou art fond of Vice for the
sake of the Scandal. [Answer] Ay,
"Ay, you may give it what Names you
"please; but the dear Felicity of Life
"is concealed under these hideous Ti-
"tles [by calling it Vice &c.] like a
"good Face under a frightful Vizor:
"And as there is no Preferment to
"be had without Interest; so there is
"no Pleasure to be had without Scan-
dal.

But to be more particular. To this
End they apply the *Act of Parliament*
pass'd in the late Reign for *Toleration* of
the *Protestant Dissenters*. If a Man can
commit a *Sin* without a scruple, they
say he hath his *Liberty* by Law, and may
go on. Thus *Liberty of Conscience* is
render'd as a *Liberty* to act without any
Conscience at all. This is a bold Reflecti-
on upon the *Legislative Power*, and if
this *Liberty* is not restrained, it may
prove of pernicious Consequence. This
Act of Parliament is particularly applied
to encourage *Adultery*. Women (g) can-
not please long (saith an Actor) if they
affect

(g) Love's
Contrivance,
printed 1703.
page 17. line
antepenult.

affect an arbitrary sway [to keep their
 Husbands to themselves] and the Reason
 he gives is, because there is *Liberty*
 of Conscience. Another also (b) speaks
 more fully to the Purpose. Every

(b) Gibraltar,
 Sheet E
 page 39. line

25.

Man after his own Fancy, I say you are
 for a Whore, I am for a Bottle. As long
 as there is *Liberty of Conscience* abroad,
 Why should not every Man be damn'd
 in his own Way? These are their Reports
 upon the Statutes of this Realm.

Blessed be God, we have good Laws
 lately made for the suppressing of
Immorality and *Profaneness*. These Laws
 have been also put in Execution.

Some of the Players have also felt the
 Smart of them; and therefore they
 are Angry, and cannot forbear shewing
 their Resentments against the Law-
 Makers, and rendering them ridiculous.

I, faith one, will [i] petition the House
 of Commons to prove me a Cuckold,
 and be Divors'd by Act of Parliament.

(i) Hamstead
 Heath, page
 48. line 21.

I wish they would petition for their
 farther Regulation, or others would
 Petition for their Total Suppression,
 and hope that either the one or other
 would be soon granted. The Parlia-
 ment made an Act in the late Reign,
 against profane Swearing and Cursing.

To

(k) Gibral-
tar, page 6,
line 18.

To this (k) one of the *Actors* refers, *we pay for Swearing, and we pay for Drinking,* and another infers from thence, *That thus is Vice, by the Dexterity of our Councils, made the Supporter of Religion and the Laws.* All their Efforts cannot abolish such *Acts of Parliament*, and therefore they thus endeavour to ridicule them.

But for a farther Encouragement of *Vice*, they represent their principal Persons, as most scandalously *vicious*, and reward them with good Wives and Fortunes at the End of the *Play*, at best they are not punished as they deserve. This was fully charg'd upon them by Mr. *Collier* in a whole Chapter on this Subject, but nothing that can be said will cause them to amend; there must be some other *Method* to reclaim them. Here I cannot but do Justice to the Author of *The Lying Lover*, who hath shewn us the ill Consequences both of *Lying* and *Drunkenness*, and (tho' there are some *Oaths* and *Curses*, from which no Modern *Play* is free, and other Expressions which I shall not justify) is the best of all those which have been lately printed. But this one excepted, there is not such another Instance.

stance. A *Goal* is a dreadful Representation on a *Stage*; one Instance is enough to terrify the whole *Pit*, and leaves an Impression when *Hell* is thought to be a *Jest*. In other *Comedies* they take other Methods, caress the *Atheists*, and reward the *Debauchees*.

In the *Comedy* of *Gibraltar* there are no greater Persons than *Wilmot* and *Vincent*, two *English Colonels*, these endeavour to debauch *Leonora* and *Jacqueline*, two *Spanish Ladies*, for this Purpose they form several Intreagues, first with *Guzman*, and then with *Blinarda* their *Governess*, they frequently confess themselves to be notorious *Whoremongers*, and are afterwards rewarded with marrying these *Ladies*, with two thousand Pounds each for their Portions.

In the *Comedy* call'd *The Confederacy*, *Dick* is a *Gamester*, he disowns his *Mother*, steals from her, swears and curses most horridly, and is guilty of many other *Vices*; he also marries *Corinna*, a *Maiden* of a great *Fortune*, and unexpectedly receives ten thousand Pounds from his *Mother* *Mrs. Amlet*: The whole *Plot* turns upon him, since the *Confederacy* in the *Play* is only a *Combi-*

Combination between him and *Brass* his Man, for all sorts of Mischief.

In *The Portsmouth Heiress* there are three remarkable Instances of this Nature.

First, Captain *Rainer* is publickly Debauched from the *Beginning* to the *End*. At his first Entrance upon the *Stage* he rails against *Religion* and *Reformation*, and carries his Cause against a very trivial Opposition; he pleads for *Whoring*, and endeavours to debauch every Woman almost that he meets; Acquaintance or Strangers, or in Masks, are all alike to him. This is a *free* and *well-bred* Gentleman, the Principal Person in the *Play*, who in the *End* marries *The Portsmouth Heiress* with ten Thousand Pounds Fortune.

Secondly, *Venture* forges *Lyes* and *Intreagues* to steal a Fortune; he courts *Lucia* supposing her to be *the Portsmouth Heiress*, and afterwards marries her: However, she proves to be a great Fortune; and thus all his Tricks and Cheats are rewarded with Success.

Lastly, *Feignwell* forges *Lyes* of *Freemont*, debauches *Maria*, then flights her and courts another; in the *End* he

he marries *Maria*, who had a Thousand Pound; so that these are their *Exits* after all their Roguery.

But some object, Are there not later *Plays* written, to expose the *Vices* of the Age, particularly the *Gamester*, and the *Basset Table*? And will not such contribute very much towards a *Reformation*?

To this I answer, That the chief Matter, which the *Plays* Expose, is a little *Pedantry*, *Humour*, and *Formality*, a Country Clown, or an affected Gate, which signifies nothing in Matters of *Religion*, and is in no respect inconsistent with the *Civil Government*. It may also be granted, that they sometimes expose *Covetousness*, being a *Vice* directly against their Interest, and consequently as odious to them as *Religion* and *Reformation*. But to expose *Covetousness*, before a Company of *Rakes*, *Spendthrifts*, and *Prodigals* (for such are most of those who resort to the *Play-Houses*) serves rather to sooth them in their *Vices*, and harden them in the contrary *Sin*. The *Gamester*, and the *Basset Table*, are written by the same Author, and (omitting several exceptionable Passages, are very little serviceable

serviceable to the pretended Design. The Epilogue of the *Gamester*, speaks against this particular *Vice*; but the Design of the *Play*, and the Conduct of *Valere* the *Gamester* seems rather to infer, that *It is good to have Two Strings to our Bow*. If we Game and succeed therein we are provided for; if that fails we shall pass for Gentlemen, and may marry rich Fortunes; and tho' we break our *Oaths* and *Promises* which we made at first, yet the Ladies will soon believe us at another Time. For my Part I expect no good from a *Play* were the *Devil* is invoc'd in the very first Line, and believe our *Reformation* must be carried on without his Assistance. However, the Author seems sensible that there might be good *Morality* in the *Epilogue* of the *Gamester*, and therefore takes Care to be guilty of no such Fault in the *Epilogue* of *The Basset Table*; and as in the other *Valere* was a Loser, so in this *The Lady Reveller* games and wins, and is afterward married to the Lord *Worthy*, one of the best *Reputation*. In short, in these two *Plays* are contained all, I think, that they can boast of in two Years, which serves to reform

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a Vice to which their *Hearers* may be inclin'd. From these their *Champions* make the great Noise of their *Reformation*, and these serve rather to amuse the World, than to amend it: And if their *Hearers* game less, which I hardly believe, it may rather be imputed to some other Cause, than to their being convinced by what was spoken on the Stage, in these *Comedies*.

If the Stage encourageth *Theft*, we can hardly expect that it will be serviceable to suppress *Gaming*; or that they who lead others in the Way to the *Gallows*, will forewarn them of a *Sin* which hath a less Penalty. Now *Theft* is there encouraged, both by Recommendation and Example. In

The (a) *Metamorphosis* there is a bold Stroke. How strangely the World is altered? Of Old, Good morrow Thief,

(a) Page 15, line 13.

was as kindly received, as now, your Honour. The Spartans and the Arabians held it lawful; so grew Arabia happy, Sparta Valiant. In (b) the *Confederacy*, Dick the Gamester, readily finds the Way to his Mother's Box:

(b) Page 31, Act 3, line 1, &c.

And if Children and Apprentices can do the same, the *Play-House* may be full, and others will pay for it.

K

How

However, let us suppose, for once, that they exclaim against *Gaming*; yet there is another *Vice* which they constantly recommend, I mean *Adultery* and *Whoredom*. Wherever the Word *Love* is in the *Title Page*, there the *Intrigues* of this Nature are represented in the Book, and drawn up even into a *Science*. A late *Comedian* made this Observation (c) that *Whores were Dog cheap, at London, and a Man might but step into the Play-House Passage, and pick up half a Dozen, for half a Crown*. In short, these *Intrigues* are the *Plots* upon which the *Plays* turn, both *Comedy* and *Tragedy*, and wherein their *Wit* is shewn; so that we may as certainly expect to find such *Instances* as to find both *Men* and *Women* in the *Drama*. For this Reason they frequently plead for *Adultery*, sometimes in (d) *Men*, and sometimes in (e) *Women*, and sometimes in (f) both, and seem wonder-

(c) *Gibraltar*, page 6, line 9.

(d) *Love at first Sight*, page 1, line ult p. 12, l. 24. *The Biter*, page 44, line antepenult.

The Portsmouth Heiress, page 42, line 9.

The Roving Husband reclaim'd, page 47, line 6.

The Tender Husband, page 48, line 19. p. 49, l. 4.

(e) *Hampstead Heath*, page 28, line

25. *Perolla and Izadora, Epilogue* line 13 with *Smut* following it. *Solon*, page 25, line 18. p. 48, l. 21. *The Cares of Love*, page 31, line 24. *The Tender Husband*, page 49, line 22.

(f) *Love at first Sight*, page 43, line 13 and 26. *Love the Leveller*, page 8, line 12. *The Biter*, page 44, line 21. *The Conquest of Spain*, page 4, line 33. *The Portsmouth Heiress*, page 50, line 17. *The Roving Husband reclaim'd*, page 31, line 17.

fully

fully pleas'd with (g) one of the married Couple who will wink at such Crimes in the other. At other Times they represent (h) Constancy to each other, as a scandalous Vice in the Eye of the World, they strongly (i) plead for Whoredom, and (k) extol the Office of a Pimp or Procurer as a Business of Weight, Merit and Authority, a civil Imployment, fit to make a Man a privy Councillor, and as no common Blessing to Mankind. Here the Auditors are taught in Words at Length, and not in Figures only, how to debauch the Women with whom they converse, and their Expressions are gilded over with all the Art and false Rhetorick imaginable. Here they are taught how to solicit the Lady her self, and sometimes how to intreat with the waiting Gentlewoman both by fair Words and Bribes to betray the young Mistrefs, or ensnare her Affections. Here they are taught how to employ even their waiting Men to intreat

(g) The Careless Husband, page 6, line 33.

(h) The Careless Husband, page 43, line 27.

(i) Gibraltar, page 3, line 3 and 34. Sheet E page 35, line 4, &c. as large. Sheet E page 38, line 1. Sheet H page 49, line 27. Love at first Sight, page 3, line 4, &c. to the end. p.

4, l. 9. Love the Leveller, Epilogue line 1. The Bassett Table, page 55, line 1, &c. The Fair Example, page 40, line 26.

The Portmouth Heiress, page 5, line 1. p. 50. l. 17.

The Rival Brothers, page

72, line 1, &c. with many strange Flights to this purpose. The Careless Husband, page 43, line 34.

(k) An act at Oxford, page 11, line 12. repeated in Hampstead Heath, page 13, line 26. Gibraltar, page 7, line penult. p. 10, l. 23. Sheet F p. 40, l. 13. Sheet H p. 55, l. 23. The Careless Love, page 26, line 2.

with the Servants of the other Family for the same Purpose. I have read such Instances of every Particular in our Modern Plays, that I think it not safe to direct to them even in the Margin.

(l) The Careless Husband, page 20. line 26 and 34. p. 22, l. 8.

(m) Gibraltar Sheet E. p. 40, line 18. with many others.

(n) Love at first Sight, page 43, Scene 2. with many others.

(o) Gibraltar, page 24, line 4 and 11. Sheet E p. 40, l. 1. Sheet G p. 36, l. 4. p. 57, l. 16. Hampstead Heath, page 53, line 14. Perolla and Izadora, Epilogue line 15, &c. Solon, page 25, line 28. The Amorous Miser, page 3, line 25, &c. p. 5, l. 23. The Battered Table, page 47, line 5. p. 55, l. 14. p. ult. l. 25. The Biter, page 12, line 2. p. 59, l. 25. The British Enchanters, page 31, line 28. The Confederacy, page 38, line 28. The Fair Example, page 59, line 10. The Female Wits, page 62, line 17. The Lawyer's Fortune, page 41, line 19. The Loyal Subject, page 47, line 12. The Metamorphosis, page 22, line 18. The Northern Lass, Prologue line 19, Epilogue line 23. page 3, line 19. p. 7, l. 8. p. 30, l. 29. p. 39, l. 35. p. 40, l. 12. p. 47, l. 11. p. 54, l. 31. p. 56, l. 2. p. 65, l. 17. The Portsmouth Heiress, page 10, line 1, &c. p. 32, line 28. The Rival Brothers, page 78, line 5. p. 79, l. 26. Ulysses, page 46, line 3.

(p) Arsinoe, page 26, line 11. p. 45, in fine. The Biter, page 12, line 2. and page 45. The Northern Lass, page 44, line penult. p. 55, l. 1. The Loyal Subject, page 46, Song 2, and Song 4. The Quacks, page 28, line 23. p. 30, l. 29.

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Monthly Collections furnish the Singing Masters with Songs, to teach the Ladies for their better Breeding, and sometimes for their utter Ruin. When they

use (q) Expressions with a double Entendre, they (r) have such Actions as shew their Meaning. Nay, (s) such things as are forbid to be spoken, are afterward printed at large. All these

Mysteries of Iniquity put such Notions into the Minds of the Hearers, and leave such Impressions, which otherwise they had not known; and which

some, who ignorantly have gone to the Play-House, have afterwards ingeniously confess'd. Here are all Sorts

of Love-Stories related, to please the Fancy; and all Sorts of Devices shewn, which Satan can invent, to insnare and

ruin the well meaning, but two unwary Girl: And when Whoremongers have learn'd their Parts on the Stage, they will quickly act them in another Place. In a late Comedy, Fetcher a

Pimp tells his Master, [t] that he found

his Wenches for him, and afterwards

acquaints the Audience, how he came

by this cursed Skill, [u] I am read,

I am Book-learned. The Reason that

Pimps so often miscarry is, because they

K 3

don't

(q) The Northern Lads, page 66, line 2.

The Quacks, page 26, line 25. p. 29, l. 2.

The StageCoach, page 2, line penult.

(r) The Careless Husband, page 8, line 21.

(s) The Quacks, Epilogue the first.

(t) Gi-braltar, page 5, line 8.

(u) Gi-braltar, Sheet E page 40, line 16.

(x) An
Act at Ox-
ford, Preface
page 5, line
ult.

don't read History, they don't grow acquainted with Stratagems. I for my Part read History, and thou shalt see I'll do thy Business rarely. Now as (x) Plays by the Poets are accounted the Genuine History of the Age; so I suppose they are spoken of by this intreating Pimp, but I am sure they are exactly adapted for such a cursed Purpose.

The Roving Husband reclaim'd is a Comedy said to be written by a Club of Ladies in Vindication of Virtuous Plays, and printed in this present Year. I shall therefore transcribe at Length what these modest Ladies speak of Adultery, with a Virtuous Design, as they tell us, to reclaim a Roving Husband, that the Reader may the better judge of other Performances upon the Stage.

Page 17, line 25, spoken by Women, the first married, the other single.

'Tis mightily out of the Mode to love ones Husband, and 'tis Alamode to love some Body else. [Answer.] It's a strange Fashion methinks. [Reply.] Only the prettiest in the World; nothing pleases me like it. Note that a Text of Scripture

ture is immediately quoted for Proof of this Doctrine.

Page 29, line 8. spoken by a Colonel endeavouring to debauch a married Woman.

I desire nothing from you, but what is for your good; — 'Tis Love! Almighty Love! has never given me Rest since I saw you. Here an Attribute of God, is ascribed to a Pagan Idol.

Page 31, line 17, spoken by a married Woman concerning Adultery.

If married Folks must have no Pleasure but from one another, they had as good be condemn'd to the Gallies, and the Town would be but a despicable Place.

Page 33, line 16, spoken by a Widow and the Colonel.

Widow.] *She [whom the Colonel would debauch] fancies 'tis ordained for Wives to suffer without Thought of Return. [Colonel.] She's much to be pitied, for she, I believe, knows not what it is to be really happy, [that is, to commit Adultery. Answer Widow.] There-*

fore she's not to be pitied, for she knows not what she wants, or else I warrant she would not be so backward. The Widow proceeds with a Tincture of Smut, which I must omit.

Page 47, line 6, spoken by a Man.

My Heart I can give but to one, and that must be a Woman that neither seeks mine, nor any one's else; my Body I can dispose of in several Places.

Page 51, line antepenult, spoken to a married Woman by a Lady.

Neither can I imagine what makes you take such Pains to be true to a Man, who is false to you, for to my Knowledge, your Husband has a Mistress now ready to lye in. Here a Person of Quality is represented as a Pimp.

Page 52, line 11, spoken by the same Lady.

I am for the modern Way. Love a little, not long, but often; and never make thy self uneasy for any Man. The Virtue you boast of so much, I own, is a very fine thing if one could have it insur'd; but it often happens Women grow
weary

weary of it, when no Body cares to take it from them: And lest this should be your chance, you had as good give it [commit Adultery] while you may be thank'd for it, as keep it and cry it about the Streets when no Body will buy it.

Page 59, line 5, spoken by the Devil,
rais'd by a Fortune-teller.

*Just such a one is allotted for thee,
Which if you refuse you ne'er happy will be:*

*Ne'er think 'tis a Sin, [Adultery] of a
Truth I do know*

*'Tis the Will of the Fates, and they will
have it so.*

Here *Adultery* is represented as the only way to Happiness, as irresistible, and what the Fates or God decrees. and is consequently the Author of. 'Tis true, this is spoken by a *Devil incarnate*, and this, I suppose, the Virtuous Authors think to be a sufficient Apology.

Page 62, line 8, spoken by the Colonel.

*If you love me how can you see me
ling'ring for that which you can with so
much Ease and Pleasure grant? A
Woman that is more chaste than I would
have*

have you be, what is she good for? A sul-
len thing, that makes it her Business and
Pride to war with the Flesh: [accord-
ing to our Baptismal Vow] She has
cold Blood in her Veins, perhaps, and if
it be natural, 'tis a lazy Disease, and
not a Virtue.

[y] Page
40, line 5.

[z] Page
3, line 19.

[a] Page
35, line 6.

[b] Page
53, line 11.

Beside, in this *Virtuous Play* here is
contained great Store of Smut, [y]
both in Verse and Prose, spoken with-
out Distinction [z] by a Widow [a]
by a Colonel, and [b] by a Lady of
Quality. I hope the Authors intend-
ed not to affront their Modesty, but
'tis Pity that the Ladies when they
write, must follow the Fashion.

If then a *Comedy* written by Ladies
is offensive, tho' they are naturally
more modest than the other Sex, what
must we think of such as are writ-
ten by Men? If a *Comedy* written in
Vindication of *Virtuous Plays* is scan-
dalous, what must we think of those
who have no such Design in View.
If it is thus with a *Play* printed after
those which are most profane have
been exposed, what must we think of
the *Plays* when the *Poets* went on
without Controul? And if it is thus
since the *Stage* is under Correction

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17. Prov
1 Tim.
(f)
1 Thes.

and pretends to an extraordinary Reformation, what was it before Mr. Vanbrugh and Mr. Congreve took this Employment upon them?

Can any one therefore think that the Poets or Actors ever read or mind such Places of Scripture which speak against (c) Adultery, (d) Fornication and (e) Whoredom, and exhorts us to avoid (f) all such Discourse as hath a Tendency thereto? The Scriptures tell us that these Sins expose us to the Judgments of God, and tend to the Ruin both of Soul and Body; and if such Men thought hereon, they would not thus venture to debauch our Youth, and turn our Cities into so many Places like Sodom and Gomorrah, lest when others may be destroyed with Fire and Brimstone, they also should perish in the Flames. But he who compares their Practice with the Scriptures hath Cause to think that these Vices are so frequently promoted, because they are

(c) Exod. 20. 14. Lev. 20. 10. Deut. 5. 18. Psal. 50. 18, 21. Jer. 7. 9. 10, and 13. 27, and 23. 10, 11. Prov. 6. 26, 32. Ezek. 23. 45. Hos. 2. 2, 3, and 4. 13, 14. Mal. 3. 5. Matth. 5. 27, 28, 29, 30, and 15. 18, 19. Mark 7. 20, 21. Luke 18. 19, 20. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Gal. 5. 19, 21. Heb. 13. 4. Jam. 4. 3, 4. 2 Pet. 2. 13, 14.

(d) Ezek. 16. 15, 28, 29, 58, 59. Ait. 15. 20, 29. Rom. 1. 21, 24, 29. 1 Cor. 5. 9, 10, 11. 1 Cor. 6. 13, 18. 2 Cor. 12. 21. Colos. 3. 5, 6. 1 Thes. 4. 3. Heb. 12. 15, 16. Jude, verse 7. Rev. 2. 20, 21, 22.

(e) Lev. 19. 29. Numb. 25. 1, 3. Deut. 22. 20, 21. Deut. 23. 17. Prov. 23. 27, 28. Jer. 13. 27. Hos. 4. 10, 11. Nah. 3. 3, 4. 1 Tim. 1. 9, 10. Rev. 21. 8, and 22. 15.

(f) 1 Cor. 15. 33. Eph. 5. 3, 4, 11, 12, and 4. 29, 30. 1 Thes. 5. 22.

so frequently forbidden; and the *Actors* are so plainly guilty of corrupt Communication, because God hath so plainly caution'd us to avoid it.

From Fornication and all other deadly Sin, and from those who thus endeavour to promote it, Good Lord deliver us.

In our *Litany* we pray to God to deliver us, from *Battle and Murder*, (e) *Exod.* 20. 13. *Dent.* 5. 17. *Gen.* 9. 6. *Numb.* 35. 30, 31. *Rev.* 21. 8, and 22. 15. 1 *Tim.* 1. 9. *Gal.* 3. 19. 21. *Rom.* 12. 18, 19, 20, 21. *Matth.* 5. 21 to 26. *and from sudden Death.* In (g) the *Scriptures*, *Murder and Revenge*, and even every thing which hath a Tendency to such Crimes, are positively forbidden. Upon the *Stage*, especially in *Tragedies*, the *Hearers* are taught to delight in Blood. There is scarce a *Comedy* without Instances of Whoring, and scarce a *Tragedy* without Instances of *Murder and Revenge*, nay Plots and Contrivances to bring about such Designs. If the *Reader* views but one

(b) *Perolla* and *Izadora*, *Act* 2, beginning in page 13.

(b) *Act* mentioned in the Margin, he may have a small Taste of all the Rest, and perhaps may think it needless to search for more. Besides we have several Instances of self-Murder on the *Stage*, and I do not remember one which is afterward exposed as a Crime. Such Sights, *Bloodshed* and *Cruelty*, being

being shewn on the Stage, do by Degrees occasion the *Spectators* to be fierce and outrageous ; and Men, if I may so speak, do there learn to be inhuman. It is in this case very observable, that the greatest *Persecutions* that were ever raised against the *Christians* were begun and carried on in *Heathen Rome*, where they had their *Theatres*, and their *Tragedies* were most frequently acted. This made them more savage, and barbarous, insomuch that the Martyrdom of the *Saints* soon became their Diversion, and *Christians* were in Reality brought forth to be devoured by *wild-Beasts*, and thus make Pastime for those who had pleas'd themselves with such Resemblances. And since the *Reformation* it is as remarkable, that the dreadful *Persecutions* against the *Protestants*, and all the cursed Designs to destroy our *Religion* have either been begun, or at least, approved and promoted by that City. This is that *great Whore*, who hath diverted her self by the *Theatres*, and *Jubilees* ; and as she was addicted to such Sports and Pastimes, it may be the less wondred at, that in all Ages she hath made her self so drunk with the *Blood of the Saints*.
In

(i) Exod.
20. 16. Deut.
5. 20. Psal. 15.
1, 3, and 50. 16,
20, 21. Matth.
7. 1, 2, 3, 4,
5, 12.

(k) The
Fair Example,
page 10, line
31.

(*) The Bi-
ter, Epilogue
page 1, line 23.

(†) The
Biter, Epilogue
page 2, line
penult.

In the (i) *Scriptures*, we are com-
manded to be tender of our Neigh-
bours Reputation as well as our own,
and in this as well as other Particulars
to do to others as we would have them
do to us. Our *Plays* abuse all Orders
and Degrees of Men among us, without
any manner of Distinction, and advise
their *Hearers* to follow their Example.
I shall here insert (k) at large, one
of their Precepts to this Purpose.

*When Men's Backs are turn'd, if you
have any Scandal to load them with,
then be sure to remember them, nay for-
get your own Name sooner than theirs;
for let me tell you, Scandal is the very
Pam in Conversation, and you should
always lead it about for the good of
the Board; spare no Body, every one is
pleas'd to see their Neighbour loo'd:
If you have but Stock enough to pay your
Club in that, you may keep Company
with the highest Flyer of 'em all. Nay,
since they are apprehensive that (*)
the Liberty of the Stage in this Re-
spect begins to decline, and that they
must not use their abusive Talents in
publick, as formerly they have done;
therefore (†) they advise others to rail
at, and expose their Neighbours in
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private, from the highest to the lowest, and tell us, that this is the true Way to work a *Reformation*. Their Way to reclaim one *Vice*, is by committing of another, and *Doing evil that good may come*, is esteemed among them as a *Virtue*.

In *Scripture*, *Pride* is represented, as a (l) grievous Crime, which God resists, which goeth before *Destruction*, which causeth *Contention* and *Shame*, and is hateful both to God and man. In (m) the *Play-House* it is represented as the only Guard to *Virtue*.

In *Scripture*, we are caution'd to avoid (n) *Rioting* and *Drunkenness*, being *Vices* unbecoming of the *Gospel*, and exclusive of *Heaven*. Upon the *Stage*, (o) *Drunkenness* is commended at large, and (p) a *Song* is sung in Praise of it. When (q) the *Rich Man* in the *Gospel* said to his Soul, *take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry*; then God call'd him *Fool*, and told him, That that very night his soul should be required of him. Upon the *Stage* (r) a mock *Justice* of *Peace*, instead of giving good Examples, punishing evil Doers, and rewarding such as do well, turns to these Excesses, bids God *Defiance*, argues with himself

(l) 1 *Per.*
5. 5. *Prov.*
16. 18, and
13. 10, and 11.
2. and 8. 13.
Psal. 101. 5.

(m) The
Tender Hus-
band, page 1,
line 8.

(n) *Deut.*
29. 19, &c.
Prov. 23. 20,
21, and 28. 7.
Luke 21. 34.
Rom. 13. 12,
13, 14.

1 *Cor.* 5. 9, 11,
and 6. 10
Gal. 5. 19,
21.

(o) Love at
first Sight, pa.
3, line 4, to
the End.

(p) The A-
morous, Miser,
page 39.

(q) *Luke* 12.
16 to 2.

(r) The No-
thern Lais, pa.
38, line 20. and
p. 39, l. 24.

himself in a *Language* directly agreeing with this *Fool*, and ushers it in, with the *Blasphemous Pretence* of his *Eyes* being opened, and an extraordinary *Revelation*.

It is therefore very evident, that the *Scriptures* and the *Stage* are directly contrary to each other. The *Scriptures* recommend *Virtue*, and the *Stage* recommends *Vice*; and as we cannot serve *God* and *Mammon*, because they are contrary *Masters*; so for the same Reason, I cannot but admire how a Man who believes the *Scriptures*, and pretends to *Christianity*, can take any *Pleasure* in a *Play-House* *Diversion*.

C H A P. VIII.

Superiors and others abused by the Stage.

HAVING shewn in the former Chapters, how void our present Stage is of the Fear of God, I shall now speak of that Regard, which they pay to *Man*; and this upon a due Examination will be found to be of the same Piece. In short, they endeavour to censure, ridicule and expose all Men from the highest to the lowest without Distinction. All that come in their Way must be the Subject of their Scorn and Contempt, especially such as are in *Authority*.

The *Scriptures* do exhort us [a] to obey our *Superiors* in general, to pay them all possible Respect and Honour, to *render to them their due*, and tell us, that *Kings* and *Rulers* are *God's Vicegerents*, and act by his special Commission; but the *Language* of the Stage is of a very different Nature.

To begin therefore with *crown'd Heads*. The Stage pretends to have *Patents* from such to act; and therefore,

(a) *Exod.*

20. 12. *Deut.*

5. 16. *Matt.*

22. 21. *Rom.*

13. 1. 2. 3.

4. 5. 6. 7.

1 *Tim.* 5. 17.

18. *Heb.* 1.

7. 17. 1 *Pet.*

2. 13. 14.

fore, tho' Religion must be kick'd out of Door, yet one would think, that either *Gratitude* or *Interest* might teach them better Manners. 'Tis true, they set themselves up for the Schools of good *Breeding* and fine *Language*: But, as our *Saviour* tells us, we do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles; and we must not expect, that they who act so rudely themselves, can teach others Civility. The *Beam* is in their eyes, and therefore till this is cast out, they are very unfit to discover such a *Moth* in another Man's; and indeed, it is necessary that they should reform themselves, before they pretend to give Example for others to imitate.

(b) The
Faithful, Ge-
neral, page 8,
line 35.

The first Instance which I shall mention, is the more remarkable, because we are told in the *Title-Page*, that it was spoken at the *Queens Theatre*, by one of *Her Majesties* sworn Servants. The Words are [b] these.

*Imperial Drones, that with luxurious Ease
Securely loll upon their lazy Thrones,
And never think from whence their safety
comes:*

*Tho' thousands nobly Sacrifice their Lives
To guard their Crowns, or but increase
Power,*

Tet

*Yet see the Recompence of all their Toils;
The Gratitude of Kings.*

What Service this is to *Her Majesty*, I do not apprehend. The *Actors* tax a crown'd Head with *Negligence* and *Ingratitude*, and then leave a disaffected *Auditor* to make the Application, and suggest to others in private the Words which are thus spoken in publick. In one (c) *Tragedy Rhoderique the King* is represented as a most inhuman Ravisher of an innocent *Virgin*. In (d) others, the Kings are represented as hearkning to all manner of evil Council, and punishing their best Friends, until thereby they procure the Hatred of their Subjects, and bring themselves to the Brink of Ruin. In some *Tragedies* the Kings and Emperors are deposed. In some they are murdered. In others, *Plots* are carried on against them, and frequently with Success, lest *Traitors* should despair in forming their Enterprizes; besides we are told, that (f) in *Rebellion, Success avows the Fact*, and a *Rebel* (g) in the midst of these Conspiracies cries out, *Oh for a Crown! I will about the glorious Enterprize*: and all this, as Mr.

(c) The Conquest of Spain, page 15, line 24. p. 23, l. 9, &c.

(d) The Faithful General, page 8, line 10. p. 9, l. 9. The Loyal Subject, page 30, line 20.

(e) Page 56, line ult.

(f) The Portsmouth Heiress, page 13, line 18.

(g) Solon, page 23, line 14, Scene Athens, a Common Wealth.

(b) His
Usefulness of
the Stage, from
page 49, to pa.
69.

(i) The
Faithful. Ge-
neral, page 48,
line 26.

(k) Page
34, line 13.

[l] Perolla
and Izadora,
page 63, line
34.

Dennis observes (b) is very service-
able to the *English Government*. How-
ever, it is well that our *Laws*, and
the Sense of our Duty work stronger
on the Fancy than these Representati-
ons, otherwise we know not what
might be the Consequence. In (i) one
Tragedy, *Galerius* the *Emperor* kneels
to his Mistress, and is affronted by her,
without shewing any Resentment, nay,
he (k) afterward sneaks down into the
same Posture with Words more sub-
missive than before. In another, *Han-
nibal* is represented both as a *King* and
a *General*, and yet [l] he is publicly
and scandalously affronted.

These are Foreign Examples, yet
they may have a Domestick Influence:
However, Instances nearer Home may
be produced. Her Majesty was gra-
ciously pleas'd to send Her Forces to
Cadis under the Command of the *Duke
of Ormond*, to attack the Enemy on
that side, with Hopes of Success. It
happened that some of the *Soldiers*
abused the *Nuns* and other Women,
in such a Manner, as alienated the
Affections of the *Spaniards*, and so the
Design miscarried. The next Year
Sir George Rook attack'd and took

Gibraltar.

Gibraltar. The *Cadis* Expedition and the Cause of the Miscarriage was a Subject very unfit for Comedy in the English Nation; in Spain it might have pleas'd *The Duke of Anjou*. However, here we have a Play call'd *Gibraltar*, representing all the English Souldiers, as addicted to Whoredom, and one would think, it was designed to bid the Spaniards beware. In this Comedy, to shew that the Officers are all alike, there are only two English Colonels, viz. *Wilmot* and *Vincent*, who endeavour to debauch *Leonora* and *Jacquelinda*, two Spanish Ladies, declaring against Marriage. Nay, they tell them [m] that the Women are afraid of their Liberty, as well as the Men; as if the Liberty aim'd at, was only to make them Whores. This was written by Mr. Dennis, who knew the Usefulness of Plays to the English Government. However, blessed be God, we have better Success, and our Soldiers behaved themselves in another Manner; but no thanks is due to the Poet or Stage, who made a Jest of that, for which all others sorry in earnest.

(m) Sheet
E page 33,
line penult.

The French being beaten at *Hockstead* and *Ramellies*, the Siege of *Bar-*

L 3

celona

(a) This was published since the 10th Day of March last, and therefore I have not mentioned many other exceptionable Passages, which are in it.

(b) The Conclusion bring in Verse, and the Summ of all, page 72, line 34.

(c) The Title Page.

(d) Wednesday July the 24th, and Thursday July the 25th, 1706.

(e) Page 38, line 25. p. 32, l. 4.

(f) Page 32, line 25.

(g) Page 29, line 10. p. 31, l. 38.

(h) Page 3, line 29. p. 5, l. 21. p. 6, l. 22 and 35. p. 7, l. 1 and 9. p. 13, l. 30. p. 23, l. penult.

(i) Page 4, line 1.

(k) Page 3, line 29.

(m) Page 4, line 15.

celona being raised in Spain, and our Generals gaining the Love of that Nation, by a more prudent Behaviour in a second Expedition, there was no Way to oblige the common Enemy, and prevent our farther Successes, except by hindering the Raising of Recruits for the Army. Accordingly, there was lately published a Comedy call'd (a) *The Recruiting Officer*, (b) to render this Employment as odious as possible.

This was acted in London (c) by some who stile themselves *Her Majesties Servants*, and also in (d) *Bristol*, whilst others were beating up for *Volunteers*.

Here one *Captain* is represented as a (e) notorious Lyar, another as (f) a Drunkard, one (g) intreaques with Women, another (h) is scandalously guilty of *debauching* them; and tho' the *Serjeant* was (i) married to five Women before, yet the *Captain* perswades him to (k) marry another, as a Cloak for such Roguery, (l) to make up his five Wives half a Dozen, and (m) to cheat the *Queen*, by entering a Child born the Day before into the Muster-Roll, and after all he stiles these

(l) Page 4, line 11.

De-

Debaucheries (n) an Air of Freedom, which People mistake for Lewdness, as they mistake Formality in others for Religion, and then proceeds in commending his own Practice, and exposing the other. In this Play the Officers are represented as (o) quarrellsome, but (p) Cowards. The *Serjeant* (q) makes the *Mob* drunk to list them, (r) gives two of them two Broad Pieces of Gold, for Pictures, and finding the Money upon them, pretends that they are list'd: At another Time he is (s) ready to swear any thing for the Good of the Service; and also (t) perswades Men to list in the Disguise of a *Conjurer*, with (u) most profane Language in Commendation of the *Devil*; and all this is to make good the saying of *Virgil* inserted in the Title Page, *Captiq; dolis, donisq; coacti*. In this Play (x) the Officers confess, that they greatly abuse the new list'd *Soldiers*; (y) *Debauching* of the Country Wenches is represented as a main Part of the Service; All the private Centinels are guilty of (z) stealing Horses, Sheep and Fowls, and (a) the *Captain* desires, that he may have but one honest Man in the Company for the Novelty's sake. After this the

(n) Page 41, line 27.

(o) Page

36, line 32.

(p) Page

37, line 6.

p. 68, l. 37.

(q) Page

18, line 6.

(r) Page

19, line 4.

(s) Page

65, line 33.

(t) Page

45, line 1.

(u) Page

50, line 15.

and 32.

(x) Page

26, line 1.

p. 66, l. 16.

(y) Page

40, line 29.

(z) Page

58, line 24.

(a) Page

63, line 13.

(b) Page
81, line 1, to
the End of the
Play.

(c) Page
65, line 24,
&c.

Justices of the Peace are made the Jest of the Stage, for (b) discharging their Duty in lifting of Soldiers, and the Constable (c) hath a Lash into the Bargain, that no one who serves his Country on this Occasion, may escape the Play-House Censure. Some of their Expressions relating to the Officers of the Army will shew us the Temper, Fine Language, and Gratitude of the Stage.

Page 55, line 9. Of Generals.

You never knew a great General in your Life, that did not love a Whore.

Page 35, line 2. Of Field-Officers.

You shall receive your Pay, and do no Duty. [Answer] Then you must make me a Field-Officer.

Page 31, line 3. Of all other Officers.

The Officers every Year bring over a Cargo of Lace, to cheat the Queen of her Duty, and the Subjects of their Honesty.

Page 31, line 16.

The

abus'd by the Stage.

153

The Officers are curs'd, saying, that they do the Nation more Harm, by Debauching us at Home, than they do good by Defending us abroad.

Page 38, line 3. Of Captains.

A bold Step --- (d) --- and an impudent Air are the principal Ingredients in the Composition of a Captain.

(d) Here are two mistakes by Entenders in the Characters of a Captain, which must be omitted.

Page 25, line 36. Of Serjeants, spoken by a Serjeant.

Cast up the whole Sum, viz. Canting, Lying, Impudence, Pimping, Bullying, Swearing, Whoring, Drinking, and an Halbard, and you will find the Sum Total will amount to a Recruiting Serjeant.

Page 6, line 31, spoken of Recruiting Officers, by a Captain employed in this Business.

What! No Bastards! and so many Recruiting Officers in Town! I thought 'twas a Maxim among them to leave as many Recruits in the Country as they carried out.

It

It may be observed, That when the Souldiers were guilty of *Immoralities* in Spain, they were caress'd by the Stage, and there crown'd with Success; but now we hear of no such Complaints, they are censur'd and ridicul'd. When they really were debauch'd, they were never thus affronted; but since the Endeavours used to reform the Army, they are thus expos'd. The greater and more signal the Services are, which they do the Nation, the more the *Play-Houses* shew their Resentments; and whilst others justly applaud them for their Merits, the *Poets* and *Actors* are the only Persons who thus lampoon them. What Thanks are due to such Men from the *French King* I shall not determine, but I am sure, that they deserve none from the *English Government*; and if neither Mr. *Dennis* nor this *Author* can render the Stage more useful, we are not, in the least, beholden for their Assistance. I suppose, that both the *Queen*, *Lords* and *Commons* have different Sentiments concerning the Merits of the *Officers*; and These who stile themselves in Print, *Her Majesty's Servants*, are the only Men, who publicly undervalue such as hazard their Lives in *Her Majesty's Service*. Nei-

Neither do they censure the Officers and Army alone; but all who belong to the Court are vilify'd, expos'd and ridicul'd. We are told at the Play-House, [n] That there is no Truth at Court; That [o] a Man in publick Trust, now and then performs one Action with the nicest Punctilio of Honour imaginable, that he may the more unsuspected play forty Knavish ones. That [p] the Courtiers run out of Town to avoid their Creditors, and [q] Want and Age hath made some of them great Husbands and Civil; but sometimes a new Debauch, and a fluttering Fellow creeps in, to make some Laughter. They tell us, that [r] the Generals now are wiser than in former Ages, and know how to spin out the War to the best Advantage. That [s] it is so unlike a Gentlewoman to talk with a Religious Air, that a Country Lady, who had been shree short Minutes at Court, would be asham'd to talk so, when she went down again to her Husband; nay, That [t] Vice by the Dexterity of our Councils is made the Supporter of Religion and the Laws. At one time they tells us, That [u] there are Places at Court and in the Army, but none to be had without Money; But at another Time, That [x] if a Man

can

(a) Love
for Love, re;
printed, 1704
page 57, line

31.

(o) The
Humour of the
Age, printed
1701, page 40
line 32.

(p) Tun-
bridge Walks,
printed 1703,
page 1, line 9.

(q) The
Lawyers For-
tune, page 38,
line 19.

(r) Solon,
page 6, line 19.

(s) Love at
first Sight pa.
14, line 21.

(t) Gibrat-
ar, page 6,
line 21.

(u) The
Lawyers For-
tune, page 29,
line 15.

(x) Solon,
page 46, line
27.

(1) An Act
at Oxford, p. 10,
line 19.
Hampstead
Heath, page
12, line 29.

(2) An Act
at Oxford, p. 49,
line 13.

can neither write nor read, yet if he can say Ay or No with the Crowd, he'll make a good Senator; and That [y] Hungry Resolution, some Assurance and no Principles are the three great Steps to modern

Preferment; Nay, [z] a Man must be very dull in Publick to qualify himself for it.

(a) Solon,
page 4, line 3.

The Late Revolution was the visible Method of God's Providence to rescue this Church and Nation from imminent Danger, and preserve to us our Religion, Laws and Liberties; and yet this signal Mercy is (a) ridicul'd and burlesqu'd upon the Stage in a scandalous Manner.

Mr. Collier in his Reply to Mr. Congreve, page 74, tells us, that Stage Princes are never represented insignificant, treated with Contempt, and play'd the Fool with in Comedy. If they were thus us'd (saith he) I question not, but that the Poets and Players would quickly bear out. But now they take a Liberty, unknown to him or former Ages, and treat both Crown'd Heads, and their Courts, with the same Scurrility, which they bestow on other Persons.

The next Compliments which they pay are to the Nobility. When Plays are guilty of Swearing, Cursing, Blasphemy,

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Smut and Profaneness, they are [b] frequently dedicated to a *Person of Quality*, that such a one may patronize them. This is rather a Affront than a Token of Respect. It is a Representing of them by Name, as Encouragers or Abettors of *Vice* and *Profaneness*. Besides, the Expressions in these *Epistles* are very remarkable. He who designs to write a *Burlesque*, or *Satyr* in Prose on any Woman, because she is affected, Proud, and Self-conceited, hath an excellent Pattern in a [c] late Dedication. One of the *Poets* wisheth, [d] that his *Patron* may live 'til every Body, and even his best Friends are weary of him, and then, I confess, it is high Time to think of Death. The *Author* of *The Careless Husband* represents only two *Lords* in his *Play*, one is the most ridiculous *Fop* in Nature, and the other a most notorious *Whoremonger*, and yet he complements a *Duke* in his *Epistle* with these Words, *I owe most of it, to the many stolen Observations, I have made from your Grace's Manner of Conversing*. Certainly, these *Poets* deserve the best Rooms in *Bedlam*. I do not wonder that they lose their Wits when they write *Plays*, because they

(b) An Act
at Oxford,
Perolla and *Ladadora*,
The *Basket Table*,
The *Lying Lover*,
The *Northern Lass*,
Ulysses.

(c) The
Faithful Ge-
neral.

(d) The
Gamester,

they have not enough left to frame an *Epistle*. Since the *Liquor of Parnassus* intoxicates their Brains, a dry Diet, and a Dose of *Hellebore* will do much better, and then they may sleep till they are sober.

(e) The Careless Husband,

Person 1 and

2. The Female Wits,

Person 5, and

6. The

Gamester,

Person 8.

The Roving

Husband

reclaim'd,

Person 3.

(f) The Ro-

ving Hus-

band, &c.

pa. 4, line 3.

(g) *Idem*,

p. 25, line 15.

(h) An

Act at Ox-

ford, page

22, line ult.

(i) An Act

at Oxford,

pa. 19, line 25.

(k) As you find it, printed 1703. page 13, line 25.

(l) *Ibid*, page 24, line 9.

(m) Love at first Sight, page 6, line 17.

(n) The Basset Table, page 49, line 2.

(o) The Careless, Husband, page 13, line 37.

To pass on to the *Plays* themselves. They (e) first in the *Drama*, mention the *Lords* by ridiculous Names, and then make them as guilty as the rest, of *Swearing*, *Cursing*, *Whoring*, and all Sorts of *Debauchery*. Here we are told that (f) their *Skulls* are empty, (g) they secure *Mony* for their *Mistresses* when they are weary of their *Wives*, and it is scandalous among them to love their *Wives* above half a Year; That (h) their *Honour* is lazy, and their *Breeding* beggerly; That (i) they are so poor, that *Six* may be broke for six *Pistoles*; That (k) *Persons* of great *Quality* have no *Sense*; (l) their *Speeches* are *Counterfeit*; (m) their *Wives* are *Whores*; (n) it is their *Prerogative* to ruin *Tradesmen*, especially with an honourable *Air*; they are (o) foolish *Fellows*,

and (p) never in Love with the Wo- (p) *Ibid*
men they would marry; they (q) pay line 27.
no Body, (r) insult every Body, (s) (q) The
abuse and affront them, ruin their Re- Confedera-
putation, kick others out of Doors, when cy, page 3,
they come to ask for their own, and (t) line 29.
spend their Money in Gaming, with (r) The
many other horrid and scandalous Re- Careless.
flections. Husband,
page 22, line
19

Confederacy page 9, line 9.

(s) The Confederacy, page 15, line 32. The Gamester
page 28, line 14. p. 32, l. 1.

(u) The Careless Husband, page 17, line 32. p. 19, l. 33.
The Confederacy, page 2, line 32.

The next Respect, which I shall men-
tion, is that which they pay to such as
put the *Laws* in Execution, from the
Highest to the Lowest, especially against
Immorality and *Profaneness*. The *Players*
were prosecuted for their Misbehaviour,
and found *Gulity*. At this they snarl
and rave, and cannot forbear their Re-
sentments. I suppose, that their *Hearers*,
being so well acquainted with their *Oaths*
and *Curses*, have paid in another Place
for what they learn'd at the *Play-*
House, and therefore the *Magistrates*
must be ridicul'd. Of this I have giv'n
some Account already in the *first Chap-*
ter, and need not repeat what is there
mention'd.

To

To begin with the *Judges*. These act by *Her Majesty's Commission*, and therefore the *Affronts* pass'd upon them have a double Stroke. Thus they insult the *Royal Authority*, as well as such who are employed thereby.

(x) An Act at Oxford, page 16, line 18.

(y) The Confederacy page 3, line 22.

(z) Love at first Sight, page 53, line 16.

(a) An Act at Oxford, page 16, line 18.

When a *Judge* is represented, the very (x) Name must be ridiculous. They give him this Character, that he is (y) *antient and hard hearted*, (z) *sparing of his Words and Sentences*, *nodding on the Bench*, with a tedious-dull Plea before him: Nay, the (a) going into *Westminster-Hall*, or into any other throughout their *Circuits*, is represented so very ridiculous, that I am ashamed to relate it.

Mr. Collier in his Reply to Mr. Dennis, page 123 concerning the *Abuse of the Clergy* by the Stage hath these Words, *When the Badge of a Man's Office which should give him Credit is shewn ridiculous*, I fancy he has Reason to complain. If the Poet is of another Mind, let him practise the same Liberty upon a *Judge* or a *Lord Mayor*, and see how the *Fest* will take. He then thought that they would not dare to do it; but we now see that they dare to do any thing.

Neither do the *Aldermen* escape any better than the *Judges*. Their Election

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lection is thus describ'd (b) Being cramb'd up into Offices among the Worshipful, and that of a Mayor, at least upon the City's Charge made drunk for a whole Year. These have also (c) ridiculous Names, and sometimes (d) as ridiculous Epithets. They are rank'd with (e) Taylors, nay with Pimps and (f) Pickpockets, and described as such, who (g) will give Money for Titles of Honour, who (h) take Bribes, and excuse all Offenders that can but pay. Such who (i) wish one another at the Devil, are in the Poets Language fit for Aldermen. One Quotation at large may be sufficient in this Case, taken out of *The Careless Husband*, Prologue the first, line 7.

—Cheats and Cuckolds, Aldermen and Cullies.

These are the Company which the Poet thinks fit for Aldermen: and when he describes them, he tells us, that they are all alike without Distinction, that they are

Creatures: a Muse should scorn, such abject Trash

Deserves not Satyr's, but the Hangman's Last. M Wretches

(b) The Faithful General, page 41, line 45.

(c) The Tender Husband, page 21, line 25.

(d) An Act at Oxford, page 30, line 1. Love the Leveller, page 6, line 15. The Lawyers Fortune, page 11, line 28.

(e) The Lawyers Fortune, page 12, line 3.

(f) An Act at Oxford, page 17, line 4. Hampstead, Meath, page 19, line 12.

(g) Love the Leveller, page 6, line 15.

(h) Squire Trelooby, Prologue page 2, line 3.

(i) The Fair Example, page 2, line 10.

*Wretches so far shut out from Sense of
Shame,
Newgate or Bedlam only can reclaim.*

(k) An The next are the *Justices of the*
Act at Ox- *Peace* in the Country. These are also
ford, Drama mentioned by [k] ridiculous Names,
Name 4. represented as [l] exposing themselves,
Hampstead and affronted by others in some whole
Heath, Drama Pages together, with all imaginable
ma, Name 4. Rudeness, and call'd [m] *The Reforming*
The Nor- *Justices, who make at least 200 l. per*
thern Lads, *Year, of Whores and Pickpockets.*
Drama, Name 3 and

4. (l) *The Humour of the Age, printed 1701, page 5, &c.*
page 14, &c. and page 38, &c. An Act at Oxford, page 37.
Hampstead Heath, page 41.

[m] An Act at Oxford, page 56, line 19. Hampstead
Heath, page 57, line 28.

(*) Page In *The Metamorphosis* [*] Roger
27, line 3. puffed up with Conceit of his being
transform'd into a Gentleman, cannot
forbear making his Reflections on this
Occasion. *When [saith he] I am in the*
Commission of the Peace and Quorum,
I will get me a Clark, a good sensible
Fellow, much wiser than my Worship,
he shall do all the Business, and I'll have
all the Credit, and the best half of the
Fees.

In *The Northern Lass*, Sir Paul is introduced as a *Justice of the Peace*, who was at first very zealous to reform the *Vices* of the Age, but soon turns to be a great *Debauchee* after serious Debates and Resolutions. He then tells the Audience, that [n] he will take a new Course of Life directly, and blasphemously pretends to *Illuminations*, as if the *Scripture* Notion of Repentance was a Turning from Virtue to Vice; for he accordingly resolves upon *Rioting*, *Drunkennes* and *Whoring*. His arguing with himself is remarkable, to [o] turn Prodigal in Point of Conscience and Equity, and [p] caresses the Debauchees as Men of the greatest Virtue. After this *Vexhem* the Constable brings [q] a *Whore* before Sir Paul; he imprisons the Constable, [r] and saith, *Now, Lady, whereas you were brought before me as a Delinquent, I retain you as my mistress*. Accordingly [s] he provides for her, is [t] very angry because she stol'n away for a Fortune, then [u] he is jested at for being a Commissioner of the Peace, [x] taken in Search for this *Whore* in a *Spaniards* Habit, [y] carried to his own House for Justice, where he is ridiculously

[n] Page 37, line 16.

[o] Page 38, line 20.

[p] Page 39, line 24.

[q] Page 46.

[r] Ibid line 31.

[s] Page 56, in fine

[t] Page 63.

[u] Ibid line 23.

[x] Page 69.

[y] Ibid

line 33.

(*g*) Page 71, line 12. treated, then [*z*] he abuseth another
 (*a*) Ibid line 40. — Magistrate by the Name of *Upstartical Justice* and [*a*] at last bribes the Constable to silence his Information.

This Example is so full that I need not add any more, neither can we

[*b*] An Act at Oxford, page 5, line 1. wonder after this, that they abuse all other Inferior Officers. The Principal among those who stick in their Stomacks are the *Informers*. The Magistrates act only by Evidence, and

[*c*] An Act at Oxford, page 29, line 33. therefore, if these can be but discouraged, the Laws and all other Officers

[*d*] An Act at Oxford, page 56, line 19. will signify nothing. Accordingly, both in *The Act at Oxford*, and in

[*e*] An Act at Oxford, page 23, line 9. *Hampstead Heath*, Driver is represented as a Reformer of Manners, and informs the Audience, that he is [*b*]

[*f*] Ibid. Scourge to publick Lewdness, but privately in Love with Whoring, and

[*g*] An Act at Oxford, page 3, line 9. Member of the *Calves-Head-Club*, that he is [*c*] Cursedly Malicious, and [*d*] makes Two Hundred Pounds a Year of Whores and Pick-Pockets. After this

[*h*] An Act at Oxford, page 37, line 28. he is represented as guilty of [*e*] Cursing, and [*f*] is buffeted and abused. Others speak of him, as a [*g*] City-Reformer, and chief Begger-Hunter

[*i*] An Act at Oxford, page 50, line as [*h*] Carrion fit only for Crows to feed upon, that [*i*] such a Man is im-

puden

pu^dent, even to a Proverb, a [k] (k) The Lawyers Fortune, page 9, line 12.
Canting Fellow; with no more Religion (l)
 than an *English Whore*, one who is (l)
 in Want, and accordingly swears for no other Reason but a Maintainance. (l) The Faithful Bride of Granada, Epilogue, line 10.

The Design of forming Societies for Reformation of Manners (m) met with the Approbation of most of the Lords, both *Spiritual* and *Temporal*, and also the Judges in *England* and *Ireland*; the Design thereof they own'd to be so truly Great and Noble, so much for the Honour of God, and the Advancement of Piety and Vertue, and the publick Good, both of Church and State, that they supposed it could not fail of being approv'd by all good Men. And yet these very Societies are subject to the Play-House Scorns. (n) What signifies, saith an Actor, your Reforming Society? The noble Exploit of demolishing a poor Sunday Apple-Stall! Here is Impiety against God, as well as Disrespect to Man. A Care for the Observance of the fourth Commandment, according to them signifies nothing; and indeed they aim to destroy, not only that, but all the rest. (n) Hampstead Heath, page 5, line 11.

As to their Treatment of *Juries*, *Bayliffs*, and other Officers, I shall give
 M 3 but

but one Quotation of each, because I have trespassed so long already upon this Subject.

The Juries,

(o) *I, saith an Actor, am one of the Grand Jury, and consequently damn'd malicious, and can hang thee right or wrong.*

(o) An Act at Ox-ford, page 29, line 31. Hampstead Heath, page 33, line 19.

The Bayliffs,

(p) *A Middlesex Bomb-Bayliff is an Impudence ten Degrees beyond the Devil.*

(p) An Act at Ox-ford, page 9, line ult.

Other Officers,

(q) *Are you fit to appear in Offices in this Saint-like Age? A notorious lewd Liver, and a Scandal to Reformation. To this it is answer'd, Why? Who is fitter to be employ'd, than he that supports the Trade of the Nation? Here Vice is caref'd, as our Support, and necessary for Trade, and could the Actors have their Will, the most Profitable Wretches should have all the Places of Trust, and Profaneness should be a Qualification for Preferment.*

(q) An Act at Ox-ford, page 8, line 22.

The Treatment of the Clergy upon the Stage is yet more remarkable. They are the Embassadors of God and Christ, and accordingly have the same Usage. 'Tis true, that since God is blasphem'd, Christ undervalu'd, and Re-

ligion

igion undermin'd, those who are in that sacred Function may be more easy under it. *It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord;* and therefore since they vilify the master of the house, how much more will they do the same by those of his household? If the Account which the Stage gives of the Clergy, be true, they are the greatest Monsters in Nature, the Bane of Mankind, the Contrivers of all Sorts of Mischief, and there is no Wickedness, but they have the greatest Hand in it. We are told by (r) a Stage Poet, that *Priests of all Religions are the same:* And therefore what they speak of one is easily applied to all the rest; Nay, is usually spoken in such general Terms, as may be applied without any Alteration. One would think, that all Sorts of Religion are a Detriment to the Stage, and therefore they are willing to expose them all. The Clergy of the Church of England makes the most considerable Figure in the Nation, and therefore they are the most censur'd and reflected on. They are spoken of on the Stage, as Persons who must joyn the Lovers in Marriage, and this is

(r) Dryden in his Absalom and Achitophel.

(s) An well known to be an Office, peculiar
 Act as Ox- to those of the Church of England.
 ford, page Accordingly, they are (s) mentioned
 36, line 22. with ridiculous Names, and (t) fre-
 The Amo- quently compar'd to Hangmen and Exe-
 rous Miser, page 56, in cutioners. The Affronts put upon them,
 fine. The mentioned in (u) the Margin, are too
 Lawyer's many to be transcrib'd, and such as
 Fortune, pa. need the Patience of the Church of
 67, line 5. England to bear with them. The (x)
 (i) Love's *Dissenting Teachers*, under the Name of
 Contrivance *Spiritual Elders* fare but little better,
 printed 1703 tho' not so often mention'd. *Testimony*
 page 34, line in (y) *Sir Courtly Nice* is brought in
 23. Portsmouth guilty of Whoring and gross Hypocrisy,
 Heirefs, pa. and makes a dishonourable Exit. The
 72, line 22. *Prologue* in *The Stage Beaux* toss'd in
 (u) An a Blanket, lasheth the Clergy of the
 Act as Ox- Church of England, and the *Dissenting*
 ford, page Teachers in a Style scandalous to the
 36, line 22. highest Degree; insomuch that the Au-
 p. 40, l. 9. thor is oblig'd to excuse himself by
 p. 45, l. 29. unusual Annotations: And when the
 Hampstead Auditors have suck'd in the vilest Opi-
 Heath, page nions imaginable of both Perswasions,
 45, line 9. Squire Tre-
 looby, Pro- logue, line 17. Epilogue, line
 15. The Amorous Miser, page 54, line 6. p. 56, l. antepe-
 sult and p. 58, l. 30. The Gamester, page 61, line 11. The
 Portsmouth Heirefs, page 7, line 3 and p. 41, l. 21. The
 Mistake, page 50, line 10. The Stage Coach, page 3, line 6.
 The Royal Merchant, page 24, line 15.

(x) The Portsmouth Heirefs, page 30, line 21.

(y) Reprinted 703, page 58, 59 and 61, to the End.

the

the Margin in Print is thought enough to salve the Matter, tho' never heard on the Stage. The *Author* of *Don Sebastian* renders the *Musti* among the *Turks*, as ignominious as he can, and exposeth the *Spanish Fryar* in the same Manner. Thus also *Love the Leveller*, and *The Faithful General* treat the *Priests* among the *Heathen*. In short, the Quotations are almost endless. No *Teacher of Religion* can escape this Lash, let him be of *The Church of England* or a *Dissenter*, *Protestant* or *Papist*, *Turk* or *Pagan*. Here we are taught, that they are all alike, all *Rogues* and *Villains*; and therefore what is said of one, the *Reader* may interpret of any as he pleaseth. *Teachers* of any *Perfwasions* are expos'd, and (2) *Atheists* are recorded as the brave *Examples* for us to follow. In *Love the Leveller* (a) the *Author* discovers some horrid *Impieties*, which he fathers upon the *Priests of Isis*; and would gladly excuse his *Mismanagement* with a *Non putâram* in the *Preface*. However, his *Expressions* are in general *Terms*, and the *High Priest* is so kind, as to discover the *Author's Design*, by talking of (b) *Cannon Bullets* and

Gun-

(2) *Love*
at first Sight,
page 9, line
3.

(a) *Page*
20, line 14.
p. 25, l. 3
and 30. p.
27, l. 22, p.
29, l. 11. p.
30, l. 21. p.
31, l. 2. p.
37, l. 28. p.
38, l. 24. p.
49, l. 3. p.
50, l. 21. p.
52, l. 3 and
p. 57, l. 9.

(b) *Page*
38, line 24.

Gunpowder, the Use whereof is well known in *England*, but was never heard of in *Egypt*, whilst the *Priests of Isis* were there: Nay, had the *High Priest* kept the *Poet's* Counsel, yet the *Walls* betray him; and one of the *Scenes*, being (c) a *Chocolate-House*, brings the Plot nearer Home, and shews, that at least there was a double Entendre.

(c) Page 26.

The *Author* of *The Faithful General* lays the *Scene* at *Byzantium* in *Greece*; but when the *Actors* speak of the *Priests*, they use a greater Latitude in their Expressions. I shall therefore transcribe some of them at large, that the *Reader* make his own Reflections.

Page 26, line 14.

Thy Dreaming Priesthood.

Page 43, line 22.

— None dare dispute
The sacred Slander, when the Priestly
Power

Hath preach'd and pray'd it into *Orthodox*.
Nay should the *Emperor* himself oppose it,
They'll represent him as the *People's* Foe,
Make him *Conspirator* against himself,
And prove it is *Religion* to dethrone him.

'Tis

'Tis an old pious Fraud, but still it takes.
Such Doctrine suits a Rabble. Answer,
And a Priest

Both are alike for Faction, fiery, rash,
Still prone to change, and ever in the
wrong.

No Arts the Prince and People can divide,
'Till you engage the Priesthood on your side.

Page 49 line 40.

— 'Twas but an Oath,
And Interest may unbind that feeble Tye,
That Case the pious Priesthood have re-
solv'd.

Page 56 line 22.

Yet still our Teachers would our Reason
blind,
And prove, Almighty Justice rules Man-
kind;
But should we plead from this unequal
Doom,

They would refer us to a World to come.
Unerring Guides they all pretend to be,
Yet know as little of the Way as we.

This is a two edged Sword, and
strikes not only at the Clergy, but also
at the Providence, Power, and Justice
of

of that *God*, whose *Servants* they are; and was not he a *God* infinite in *Mercy*, he would make them *Examples* to others, and *Objects* of his *Justice*.

Were the *Clergy* Profane and Debauched in their *Lives* and *Conversations*, I doubt not but they would be caress'd by the *Poets*, and commended in the *Plays*. We are told (a)

(d) Love at first Sight, in short, that no *Man* can be so truly
 page 16, line 36. *Virtuous*, as he who hath been truly acquainted with *Vice*, and by the same Consequence the most profligate Wretches would be the fittest for *Holy Orders*. If the *Bishops* would take this Method in their *Ordinations*, and expect *Testimonies* of lewd, rather than of sober Behaviour, the *Clergy* then may please the *Stage*; but because (blessed be *God*) it is not so, therefore they are the *Objects* of their utmost *Scorn* and *Contempt*.

I confess (to do the *Poets Justice*) that they have not of late exposed any *Vice*, in the *Romish Priests* or *Turkish Musti*, nor meddled with any of their *Opinions*. However, there may perhaps be a good Reason assign'd for it. They think their own Cause cannot do so well unless *Religion* is overturn'd. Now, Blessed
 be

ne God, the greatest Danger of our Church seems to come from these foreign Quarters, and therefore the Poets are cautious lest they should disoblige their best Friends and Confederates.

The Clergy receiving their Education in the Universities, the Poets accordingly endeavour to vilify these Seminaries of Learning, and I wonder at their total Omission of the Dissenting Schools.

The University of Oxford (e) made a Decree in Convocation, Anno 1584, a-

gainst admitting Stage Players within their Jurisdiction, lest the Younger Sort should be Spectators of so many lewd and evil Sports as are practised in them. This

Decree is never to be forgiven, because it was never yet repealed. The Stage

Beaux toss'd in a Blanket (f) shews a poor Revenge upon a Colledge Servitor;

but An Act at Oxford seems wholly designed to expose every Member from

the Highest to the Lowest. (g) Above twenty Instances may be produced from

this very Play. 'Tis true the Players cared not to act it, and affront so great

a Body in Wholesale; the Poet therefore minces the Matter in another Play call'd

Hampstead Heath, where a great Part of these Insolencies went off by Retail

with

(e) Dr. Reynolds's Overthrow

of Stage Plays, page 152.

(f) Page 9, line penult.

(g) Page 2, line 18, 25 and ult.

p. 3, l. 6. p. 4, l. 4, 13 and 27. p. 6. l.

10 and 29. p. 7, l. 25

and 30. p. 8, l. 12. p. 10,

l. 4. p. 20, l. 20. p. 23,

l. 19. p. 27, l. 30. p. 33,

l. 31. p. 35, l. 32. p. 40,

l. ult. p. 45, l. 29. p. 46,

l. 6. p. 51, l. 6 and p. 55, l. 11.

with little Amendments. This Play was acted in *Drury-Lane*, and the *Actor's* Names may be seen in the *Drama*, who told the *Hearers*, That (b) a *Servitor's Business* is to pimp for *Gentlemen* *Commoners*, That they [i] are wretched *Scoundrels*, and sorry *Dogs*, That [k] the *Tutors* are crabbed *Fellows*, and only teach a *Parcel of crabbed Authors*, Nay, that [l] the *Doctors* themselves have no *Divinity*. In this Respect *The Female Wits*, acted in the same Place, and by the same Persons, shew as little *Manners* or *Modesty*; since one of them gives [m] her *Opinion of the University Students*, That they are commonly *slovenly Fellows*, without any *Ingenuity*, their *Provision* is very wretched, and their *Conversation* is no better; but yet they are all proud, because they have been at *Oxford*: And accordingly, *Oxford* is immediately censured, as a Place, fit only to improve *Beggars*, and spoil *Gentlemen*; to make them vain, and think, that no Body hath Wit but themselves.

Had not the *Universities* been of the utmost Consequence, both to *Church* and *State*, and the *Nurseries* both for *Religion* and *Learning*, perhaps they had

had not been so reflected on. However in *The Fair Example* there is [n] as bold a Stroak, where one of the Company is pleas'd to tell the Audience.

(n) Page
27, line 25.

That he maintains at present a matter of fifty sleeping Doctors in both Universities, that do nothing but dream. Had the Players brib'd any Members of the Universities to espouse their Interest, they could but tell of it. However, their Reflections would be ungrateful for what is past, and a small Obligation for the Time to come.

The Doctors have Reason to beware of shewing Encouragement to the Actors, least the horrid Profaneness of the Stage should be interpreted as an Effect of their being spoil'd at Oxford. Besides, what Favour they shew, may be interpreted by the Actors as a Duty; because they say, that the Doctors are beholden to them for a Maintainance. However, none but they can dare to affront so venerable a Body, without any Fear of a just Resentment. I need not mention, what is said in other Play-Houses; this alone is sufficient.

The last Instance of their good Breeding, their Manners, and fine Language

(o) The British En-
chanters, *pa.*
14, line pe-
nult.

(p) Love's Contri-
vance, *prin-*
ced 1703. *pa.*
16, line 3.

(q) An Act at Ox-
ford, *page*
34, line ult.
&c. Hamp-
stead Heath,
page 39, &c.

(r) As you find it, *prin-*
ced 1703, *pa.*
7, line 13
and 21. *p.* 9,
l. 3 and 10.

The Law-
yer's For-
tune, *page*
45, line 8.
Signature,
G 3. The
Portsmouth

Heirefs, *page*
37, line

Language is known from their Treat-
ing of the *Ladies*. I have shewn al-
ready how they are adored with Ex-
pressions of Rank *Blasphemy*. It will

therefore be necessary to observe the
Virtues which render them so amiable.

Now without any Ceremony, they are
represented sometimes as (o) the worst

of *Plagues* which can befall Mankind,
sometimes as (p) horridly false, some-

times as (q) impudent in Courting of
Men, but generally as (r) notorious

Whores. This is the only Place where
the *Ladies* will sit and hear themselves

abus'd, under Pretence of Diversion.
If the *Poet's* Studies are not near Bil-

linggate, yet certainly their Conversa-
tion lies chiefly among the *Oyster-Women*,

and such as deserve the *Ducking Stool*:
And since the *Actors* have no better

Manners, the *Ladies* ought in Prudence
to abstain from such Places, where they

are so scandalously abused.

The Roving Husband reclaim'd,
page 54, line 30. *Ulysses*, *page* 13, line 29. *p.* 14, l. 22.

C H A P. IX.

The Stage a declared Enemy to all Reformation.

THE last Charge which I shall draw up against the *Stage* is their positive Declaring against all *Reformation* either in themselves or others. This shews their *Obstinacy* in the Highest Degree, and that tho' they pretend to be *Her Majesties* Servants, nay, *Her* sworn Servants; yet they defy *Her* Orders, and grow rather worse than better, for *Her* pious Care and sincere Endeavours to reclaim them. Here *Law* and *Divinity*, *Queen* and *Subject*, *Judge* and *Furies*, *Charges* and *Sermons*, *Lords* and *Commons*, *Magistrates* and *Clergy* are all valued alike. Let them endeavour to reform the World if they dare; they shall soon hear of it from the *Stage*, and be Affronted, Censur'd, Despis'd and Expos'd, and what is but whispered in other Places, is there shewn Bare-faced.

I suppose it is evident from the former Chapters, that the *Stage* is now as bad

N

as

as ever, and hates to be *reform'd*, that it is *obstinate* to the highest Degree, and abuseth all such who according to their several Offices, should be *a terror to evil doers*, and *a praise to them that do well*: But as the *Poets* and their Friends, usually cry out for farther Proof, so to gratify them, it will not be amiss to mention some other Particulars.

Mr *Collier* expos'd two *Plays* written by Mr. *Dennis*, call'd *The Relapse*, and *The Provok'd Wife*, and made good his Assertions in Opposition to the feeble Efforts of that *Author*. The *Actors* of *The Provok'd Wife* were afterward prosecuted at Law, found guilty, and fin'd for uttering several scandalous Expressions contained therein. This Usage would put any one, but a *Poet* out of Countenance, and yet Mr. *Dennis* glorying in his Shame, having afterward written (a) some other *Plays* little better than the former, stiles himself in the *Title Page*, *The Author* of these scandalous *Comedies*.

(a) The
Contedera-
cy, and The
Mistake.

Besides, The present Age is frequently derided by the *Actors*, because (blessed be God) there are great Endeavours for a *Reformation* of Manners. Enough of this *Language* may be seen

in

in (b) Prologues and Epilogues made for this Purpose, where the Actors address themselves to the Pit, and speak for the Information of the Audience. I shall only give the Reader a Tast hereof, from one of (c) their Epilogues.

With Zeal and Sin at once we're strangely warm'd,
And grow more wicked, as we grow re-
form'd.

Oh! 'tis a blessed Age, and blessed Nation,
When Vice walks Cheek by Jole with
Reformation.

Sometimes it is call'd in Derision (d) a Reforming Age, and (e) a Saint-like Age. Our Modern Societies are describ'd as such who (f) are not sincerely reform'd, but endeavour to mend others more than themselves. A modern Reformer is (g) one who can see other Mens Faults, better than his own. He who is zealous to suppress Profaneness, is stil'd (h) a Bustler for Reformation; and 'tis well if (i) he escapes without Censure. The Name of an Informer in

(b) The Rival Brothers, Prologue. The Female was Prologue

(c) The Stage Beauts tois'd in a Blanket, Epilogue, p. 3, line 7.

(d) The Rival Brothers, Prologue line 2. The Lawyers Fortune page 9, line 16.

(e) An Act at Oxford, page 8, line 22. Hampstead Heath, page 10, line 20.

(f) As you find it,

printed 1703, page 67, line 12.

- (g) The Portsmouth Heirels, page 43, line 1.
- (h) The Lawyers Fortune, page 19, line 10.
- (i) The Quacks, page 15, alias 11, line 11.

(k) Love's
Contrivance, printed
1703, pa.
12, line 18.

(l) As
you find it,
printed 1703,
page 32, line
24.

(m) The
Confederacy, page 4,
line 35.

(n) The
Portsmouth
Heirets, pa.
6, line 9.

(o) Love
at first Sight,
page 14, line
21.

the (k) Play-House Language is as odious as those of Traitor, Cheat, Knave, Coward, Rascal, Thief and Varlet.

Here we are told that (l) in the crying out against our Immoralities, the Accusers have nothing to brag of, but both Prisoners and Evidence are equally guilty.

One tells us (m) that if we reform and live honest, it is way to be starv'd. Another Principal Actor in a Play hath a bold Stroak at large (n) Religion! Ay,

there's another Topick now. Religion and Reformation! Two things that make a mighty stir in the World, without any considerable Progress, preach'd up every where, and followed no where. 'Tis as easy to reform the Follies and Vices of the Age by scandal [i.e. by Preaching against Vices, and informing against Offenders] as to perswade a Young Fellow of my liches, that there's any thing in that Religion that reins him from his Pleasure. That is in short, Religion is a Cheat, and Reformation is impossible. And lastly, Another hearing Vice reprov'd breaks out into (o) this Sarcastical Expression.

O I'm sick, perfectly sick, out of Order! Did you observe that Religious Air with which she spoke? And then proceed with an Oath, 'Tis so unlike a Gentlewoman,

that

that a Country Lady who had only been three short Minutes at Court, would be heartily ashamed to talk so, when she went down again to her Husband.

If then such must feel the Poets Lash, who endeavour to reform Vice, tho' they let the Stage alone, what Usage must such expect to attempt to reclaim the Play-House? They shall have Dirt enough cast at them, that some at least may stick, and whoever escapes, they have their Share. The Comedy call'd *The Stage Beaux toss'd in a Blanket*, is from the Beginning to the End on this Subject, and the Epilogue is very scandalous. Here Mr. Collier is censur'd, despis'd, brought in guilty of Whoredom, and makes a dishonourable Exit. I thought, that *Tossing in a Blanket* was an Office too mean for a Poet; however upon Occasion he can stoop so low, and accordingly he treats his Opponent more like a Dog than a Christian, that so the Title-Page and the Play may be both of a Piece. It is well, that the Law secures the English Subjects, and restrains the Malice of the Poets; but by this we may observe, what they would be at, if they had a Power proportionable to their Inclination.

The Stage a declared Enemy

The *Abusing* the Reformers of the Stage is now a new Subject, to employ the Poet's Wit and Spleen; and, I confess, is a very odd one for Her Majesties sworn Servants to speak, since she her self is one of the Number: But no matter for that, if she will put the Poets out of their old Road, she must expect her Share among the Rest.

Sometimes they reflect on the Reformers of the Stage in their Epistles Dedicatory and Prefaces, as (q) Enemies to the Church and present Government and as (r) snarling Zealots; and tell us that (s) now the Liberty of the Stage declines [so much the better] and that Plays, as tho' they were not dull enough before, must now, to oblige the affected Zeal and Humour of some Kind of People, be robb'd of all the Life and Pertinence [that is the Blasphemy and Profaneness which is in them].

They tell us also in their Aëts, that such who oppose them (t) do rather than they are (u) Whigs, they are (x) Hypocritical Party, nay, (y) Inveterate Hypocrites, who are Enemies to the Stage Beaux toss'd in a Blanket, Title page. page 43, line 18. p. 58, l. 29. p. 59, l. 17.

(q) An Aë
at Oxford,
Epist. Dedicatory. page 4,
&c.

(r) Zelma-
ne, Epist. Dedicatory, page
1, line 7, &c.

(s) The
Portsmouth
Heiress, Preface, line 3, &c.

(t) The
Gamester, p. 4,
l. 16.

(u) Ibid.

(x) The
Stage Beaux

toss'd in a Blanket, Title page. page 43, line 18. p. 58, l. 29. p. 59, l. 17.

(y) The Stage Beaux toss'd in a Blanket, page 49, line 17.

Sta

Stage, and say that (2) if the Stage did not make it its Business to expose Knaves and Hypocrites, they would say nothing against it. (a) Do you think [saith one concerning Mr. Collier] that any Man alive could say so many severe things against both Sexes, without having a sufficient Experience of those Evils and Frailties in himself? They represent such as (b) guilty of Whoring, and tell them (c) that if they are such Zealots for Morality, they should first reform themselves. In their Censures they have no Regard to Truth or Equity; if they can render such Persons despicable, it is no Matter how they effect it; and it is observable that these Reflections may with equal Force be applied to the Preaching of the Word, and all Instructions in Religion; and indeed if Stage Poets had their Wills, I doubt all would fare alike. In their Prologues and Epilogues they are sometimes (d) wholly on this Subject, when they speak more particularly to the Audience. There is one Quotation which I shall venture to transcribe, for the sake of the Excellent English, and smooth Running of the Verse which is almost as remarkable as the (e) Poets Scurrility.

(2) The Stage Beauchrois'd in a Blanker, page 50 line 9

(a) The Stage Beauchrois'd in a Blanker, page 57, line 14.

(b) The Stage Beauchrois'd in a Blanker, page 56, line 29. to the End of the Play.

(c) The Stage Beauchrois'd in a Blanker, page 49, line 18.

(d) The Faithful General, Prologue The Rival Brothers, Prologue. The Female Wits, Prologue. The Stage Beauchrois'd in a Blanker, Epilogue.

(e) The Faithful Bride of Granada, Epilogue line 3.

The Stage a declared Enemy

*Sure we've scap'd the Informers Inqui-
sition;*

*The Disease is bad, and he a damn'd Phy-
sician:*

*Him no Motive do's to Reformation lead
But Want, he swears because it get's him
Bread.*

*He culls the Ill, and earns from thence
his Food;*

*He, with Mending, be's ruin'd if the
World is good.*

*No, great Examples shall reform the Stage,
Must we learn Manners from the vilest
of the Age?*

Had this came from a School-Boy
it would have deserv'd Correction; but
as it comes from a Stage-Poet, it is
very fine, and deserves a Plaudite. It
is abusive, and therefore excellent. I
have heard of some Children, who learn
to curse, before they can speak plain,
and the Poet writes scurrilously, when
he cannot write Sense. Had he been a
Child, he might have learn'd better
Manners; but as he is old, I doubt
it will be the more difficult to re-
claim him.

(f) The
Faithful Gene-
ral, Prologue,
line 1.

Thus we see that they spare neither
Writers nor Reformers, (f) such Thought-
less

less Criticks of the Age, as they term them. Sometimes they have a Fling (g) at them, and away again to another Subject, and sometimes they ridicule both them and the Preaching of the Word of God together, as if both were alike Enemies to the Stage; and from thence we may explain their Arguments with a double Entendre. Some Instances of this Nature may bear a publick View, and therefore let the Reader judge of them.

Squire Trelooby, Prologue line 3.

To th' Stage the Army of Reformers come,
Sworn Foes to Wit as Carthage was to Rome:

Their Ears so sanctify'd no Scenes can please,
But heavy Hymns, and pensive Homilies.

Ibid. line 17.

With Force and fitting Freedom Vice arraign,
Tho' Pulpits flatter, let the Stage speak plain.

It will not be omits to give the Reader a Taste of their Fine Language in Prose as well as Verse, and because I will

(g) The Careless Hus-
band, page 53,
line 10.
Squire Trelooby,
Prologue,
line 22. The
Biter, Epilogue
line 24 and
in the End.
The Gamester,
page 6, line 16.
The Stage
Coach, Epilogue,
line 7.
Zelmane, Preface,
page 1,
line 8.

The Stage a declared Enemy

(h) Page
2, line 18.

will not tire him with many Quotations, I shall mention only a few taken out of *The Stage Beaux toss'd in a Blanket*. The Author begins very roundly in (h) the *Epistle Dedicatory*; and tells us, that *the Stage hath no Enemies, but such as are Hypocrites, and real Enemies to Virtue*, and gives this Reason, *Because the Stage is a professed Enemy to them and their darling Vices*. This is a bold Assertion; and the Falshood is as evident as the Enmity. However there is much more to the same Purpose, in the Play it self.

Page 29, line 8.

An Opposer of the Stage is call'd A Man of loose Principles, who can be guilty of arrogating to himself a Righteousness above all Men, as well as a Judgment and Sense superiour to all the Men of Wit in Town.

Page 2, line 37.

They ought to abhor the Play-House, since they so often see their ugly Faces there.

Ibid. line 39.

The Stage-Glass is not made to flatter Fools and Knaves, and therefore they and their

to all Reformation.

18

their Friends are for Breaking the honest
Mirrour.

7

Ibid. line penult.

Fools and Knaves have a real Quarrel
with the Stage, not that it shews their
Pictures deformed to themselves, but to
every Body else.

Page 3, line 4.

The greatest Pique Men have to the Stage
is, because their Follies and Vices are
too conspicuous, and too well belov'd.

Page 58, line 29. spoken by an Ene-
my of the Stage, endeavouring to de-
bauch a Woman of the same Temper.

Put off the Veil, I know you are an
Hypocrite. [Answer] Nay, Now you
begin to be abusive. An Hypocrite!
[Reply] Nay, I am sure of it, for almost
all our Party are so.

But an Actor tells us, (i) that now
Vice may go on and prosper: The Stage
dares hardly shew a vicious Person speak-
ing like himself, for fear of being call'd
profane, for exposing him. And to this
another answers, 'Tis hard indeed when
People

(i) The
Careless Hus-
band, page 530
line 10.

The Stage a declared Enemy

People won't distinguish between what's meant for Contempt, and what for Example.

Is there then no Curb to *Vice* except the *Stage*? Do the *Scriptures* the *Ordinances of God*, and *Laws of the Land* signify nothing in this Case? These are insignificant in their Esteem, and they had much rather that these should be abolished, than that the *Play-House* should be under Correction. But is the *Stage* afraid to shew a vicious Person speaking like himself? To what height of Impiety would they then arrive, if they had their Will? Are not their vicious Persons represented on the *Stage*? Do they not speak like themselves? Do they not condemn *God* and *Religion*? Do they not belch out most dreadful *Oaths* and *Curses*? And yet they would do worse if they dared. However, all vicious Expressions are not fit to be represented. Whatever is a *Sin* when spoken in another Place, is as much a *Sin* when spoken in the *Play-House*. If we are willing to expose a vicious Expression, it is better to make a Report thereof as spoken by another, and then resent it accordingly. I doubt not but if *Horace* was alive he would

would say of our Expressions, as he said of other Representations (k) That they are not fit to come without the Scenes. However, I am sure that the Scriptures condemn such things in general. We are there cautioned (l) not to swear or blaspheme at all, that no corrupt communication should proceed out of our mouths, and that such things should not be once named among us, and I am sure that the Stage hath no particular Dispensation. The Word of God shall regulate their Sayings when they please, but not upon the Stage. I know not which is the worst either the Sin or the Apology.

Is it hard when People won't distinguish between what's meant for Contempt, and what for Example? 'Tis as hard that the Poets will not write so, as that it may be distinguished. When the Gentlemen of the chief Character in the Play talk atheistically, and profane, and are rewarded with Success, this must be interpreted as meant for Contempt. When Women of a principal Character swear, curse, blaspheme and talk Smut, this must be meant for Contempt. It is indeed a Contempt to the Sex, but rather a Credit shewn to the Vice. But suppose they are reprov'd. What then?

If

(k) Lib. de Arte Poetica.

Non tamem intus

Dignagere promes in

Scenam multaq; tolles.

(l) Matth.

5. 34, 35,

36, 37. Jam.

5. 12. 1 Tim.

1. 20. Eph.

4. 29, 30 and

5. 3, 4, 5,

6, 7.

If one Man sins, and another reproves him for it, doth this take off the Guilt, and make it no *Sin* in the Sight of God? One Man injures his Neighbour, and another blames him for it; doth this cancel the Guilt, and make the Fact nothing? One Man speaks *Blasphemy*, and another reproves him; doth this justify the Boldness? or make the Words unspoken? This is a cheap Way of atoning for past Offences, and how it will make Amends, I cannot imagine. However, most of the Vicious Expressions spoken on the *Stage*, are spoken without any Reproof at all. Sometimes

(*m*) Love
at first Sight,
page 66, line
24.

(*n*) Love
at first Sight,
page 14, line
21.

(*o*) The
Confederacy,
page 13, line 8,
&c. page 32
and 33. p. 71,
l. 5, &c. and
p. 72, l. 1
and 21.

(*p*) The
Mistake, pa.
49. Sheet I
line 17 & 21.

the Reprover is at the same Time guilty of the Crime, which he reproves, as particularly in (*m*) the Case of Swearing. At another Time (*n*) the Reproofs are ridicul'd, and the Reprover out of Countenance; and it is as observable, that (*o*) the Profane Person goes on in the same Course to the End of the Play without Amendment, and those, who reproved at first, have afterwards shewn themselves reconciled and pleased with all the past Behaviour; and a Concern for horrid Impieties is (*p*) shewn only by taking the name of God in vain. These are the Methods of the

Play

Play-House in reproving of *Vice*, in-
much that it is evident from their
whole Conduct, that they only encou-
rage the *Sin*, and shame the *Reprover*.

It is therefore the greatest Jest of
all, That when the *Stage* is tax'd
with *Swearing*, *Cursing*, *Blasphemy*, and
all Manner of *Profaneness*, and the
Poets are called upon to mend their
Manners, they tell us, that (q) they
are the true *Reformers* of the Nation,
they arraign and condemn *Vice*, their
Design is to reform our Minds, and
regulate our Morals. Indeed, I hardly
thought, until I read it, that they had
Confidence enough for such an Af-
sertion, especially after all the Efforts
in Print, to convince the World of
their horrid *Impieties*. Perhaps in the
Devil's Chappels, they use the Words
Virtue, *Religion* and *Reformation*, to
signify such things as please him best:
and the Words *Vice* and *Hypocrisy* for
something which is contrary to his
Interest. If they take them in their
common Acceptation, 'tis too late to
use this Plea. The Nation is convinc'd
already, and know what they aim at,
and such a Vindication of their Behavi-
our shews, that they are resolved to

(q) An
Act at Ox-
ford, Preface
page 5.
Hamstead
Heath, Pro-
logue line 11.
The Biter,
Epilogue line
13 and pe-
nult. *The*
Careless
Husband,
page 53, line
10.

The Stage a declared Enemy

go on in their old Course. Do their horrid Oaths and Curses tend to a Reformation? Are their Exposing of Virtue, Encouraging of Vice, Affronting of God, and Adoring of the Devil, Signs of Reformation? This the Players seem to assert with all the Assurance imaginable. The Reformation which they drive at, is to reduce us from Christianity to Paganism, or rather from Religion to Atheism. Had they therefore been silent, and endeavour'd to amend their Faults, it had been but common Prudence to themselves and their Cause, and many would have put a favourable Construction thereon; but since they thus vindicate themselves, it is too sad a Sign, that they are given over to a Reprobate Sense, and that have nothing, but their total Suppression, and can hinder that Deluge of Impiety, which they strive to bring upon us, with the Pretence of Reformation. Never since the Creation of the World, was God so plainly visibly affronted as on the Stage. Never was the Devil so publicly ador'd in a Christian Nation as on the Stage. Never was Religion so openly undervalued, as on the Stage. Never were the Doctrines of Christianity so misapplied as on the Stage. Never were Super-

rior

vices so affronted, without a due Re-
sentment, as upon the *Stage*; and yet
they pretend to be the only *Persons* to
reform the World, and that without
their Assistance, *Vice* will go on and
prosper. They tell us that the *Pul-
pits flatter, whilst the Stage speaks plain.*
I think the *Pulpits* never flatter'd them,
and I hope, never will. The *Poets*
render all others, who endeavour a
Reformation, as the greatest *Sinners*,
and grossest *Hypocrites* in Nature.
These Men would make excellent
Soldiers, since the Brass which they
carry, would be Proof against a Can-
non Bullet. It is a Sign, that their
Cause wants a Support, when they
have recourse to such evident Lies;
and unless by a *Reformation* they in-
tend to destroy the Principles of
the Good and Evil, and introduce *Atheism*
with all manner of *Licentiousness*, it is
plain, that what they plead for them-
selves, is the most notorious Falshood
which ever was urged with the like
Stage Confidence. Had they pleaded guilty,
they might have deserved Favour; but
since they justify themselves in such
a Manner, they justly, when convict-
ed, deserve the highest Censure.

CHAP. X.

The Conclusion.

FROM what hath been said in the former Chapters, it evidently appears, That the *horrid Licentiousness* of the *English Stage*, its *Profaneness*, *Immorality* and *filthy Expressions* do far exceed the worst, which are to be found not only in all the Christian, but even in *Heathen Countries*. Whilst we are reform'd from the *Church of Rome*, our *Comedies* are a Scandal to our Reformation, and we may say to our Shame of *France*, *Spain* and *Italy*, as the Prophet *Ezekiel*, (a) formerly said of *Samaria* and *Sodom*; *They have not done, in this Respect, as we have done; they have not committed half our Sins, but we have multiplied our abominations more than they.* The lewd Expressions of the Actors are as flaming as ever. They rail at *Virtue*, and speak well of *Vice*. They discountenance *Religion*, and encourage *Profaneness*. They defy even *God* himself and laugh at the Endeavours us'd by

(a) Chap.
16. 48, 51.

Ma

Man for their Reformation. These things are the Subject of their Scorn and Contempt, their Sport and Pastime? and thus they have rendered the Attempts to reclaim them ineffectual. The *Theatres* are the *Synagogues* of *Satan*. Their *Votaries* seem rampantly bold in Sin, and openly addicted to the Service of the *Devil*. The *Plays* are a chief Cause of the *Vices* of the Age, and the bitter root that brings forth gall and wormwood. They shew to the World many dreadful Examples of all Sorts of *Impiety*, and expose *Vice* (as they tell us) not for Reproof, but for Imitation; not to suppress it, but to increase the Fashion. *Profaneness* is the chief Commodity in which they deal, and therefore they expose it, like *Merchants* and *Tradesmen*, to promote the Sale, and disperse it through the Nation. Our *Poets* (b) seem now more than ever, to fence against Censure, by the Excess of *Profaneness*, and to make the overgrown Size of their Crimes a Ground for Impunity. Their monstrous *Impieties* are almost too big to be thoroughly view'd, and too shameful to bear a Tryal. *David* seems fitly to describe them; (c) They

(b) Collier's
Short View of
the Stage,
Page 179.

(c) 2 Sam.
23. 6, 7.

are as thorns thrust away, Because they cannot be taken with hands. But the man that shall touch them, must be fenced with iron, and the staff of a spear. They are so fortified with Smut, and deeply intrench'd in Nastiness, that where they deserve most, there is no Coming at them. Many of their Expressions are too dreadful to be related, inasmuch that the bare Repeating of them hath been thought of dangerous Consequence, and a Means to spread the Infection; and yet they are too scandalous to be conceal'd, lest an universal Silence should be constru'd as an Approbation, contract a publick Guilt, and bring upon us a publick Calamity. The horrid Oaths and Curses, so frequently heard, might have been suppress'd before this Time, by the due Execution of the Laws, at least new ones had not been invented, if the Stage had not continually refresh'd the Memory of the Hearers, and harden'd them in Sin, by such dreadful Examples.

The very Fable of the Plays are oftentimes scandalously immodest; and what they call the Moral, teacheth Immorality. The whole Plot of the Poet is employ'd this Way, and all the Inferences which

which can be made from their Manner of Conversation, are *vicious* and *profane*. These things can scarcely be discovered, but by a Multiplicity of Words, and Dissecting of whole *Plays*. The *Poets* think, that no one will take the Pains to discover these Mysteries, and this makes them the bolder in such Representations. To be short, The Conduct of *Constant* and *Lady Brute* in the *Provok'd Wife* teacheth us, that if the Husband is unkind, the Wife ought in Revenge to play the Whore, and the Man, who commits Adultery with her, is to be commended for his Constancy, if he was once a Suitor. In the *Roving Husband Reclaim'd*, the *Colonel*, the *Lady of Quality*, *Mrs. Politick*, *Mrs. Venture* and the *Conjuror* attack *Fidelia* in the same Manner, and their Conversation of this Kind is enough to make any Woman ashamed, except a *Stage-frequenter*. The Successes of *Valere* in the *Gamester*, and *The Lady Reveller* in the *Ballet Table* commends the *Vices* which they would seem to oppose. The Play call'd *Solomon* is a Satyr upon *Philosophy*, not only in the Person of *Cleanthus*, but also in *Solon* himself, whose *Laws* are

O 3 expos'd,

The Conclusion.

expos'd, who sinks beneath his Character, is foolishly in Love, and in the Conclusion declares against *Morality*. *The Portsmouth-Heiress* hath a general Compound of *Vice*, and every Debauchee is crown'd with Success. *Gibraltar* and *Love at first Sight* are but little better. The Play call'd *an Act at Oxford* strangely vilifies the *Universities* in every Particular, and a great Part of the Scurrility is afterward repeated in *Hampstead-Heath*. *The Faithful General* will teach us to worship *Pagan Idols*, *The British Enchanters* will teach us to adore the Devil, and we may learn an *Hymn to his Praise and Glory* out of *The Metamorphosis*. *The Confederacy* teacheth a Master to employ his *Man* in all wicked Designs, and teacheth the *Man* to deny Matter of Fact, with all imaginable Impudence, and what is wanting herein to compleat a *Monster of Iniquity*, may be learn'd in *Love the Leveller* from the *Priests of Isis*.

Besides, it is as certain, that if any of our former Performances are worse than the rest, they are the Darlings of the present Stage, and acted there, either to keep the later Poets in Countenance,

tenance, or as Patterns for them to exceed. There are but three Plays lately reprinted, viz. *The Northern Lass*, *The Loyal Subject* and *The Royal Merchant*. The first was written in the Time of Ben. Johnson, and the other two by Beaumont and Fletcher. Our *Muses* were then comparatively inoffensive, and are therefore generally neglected. But these Plays which are selected from the rest, are remarkably scandalous for (d) Swearing (e) *Cursing*, (f) *Smut* and *Profaneness*, in making a Jest of (g) the Devil, (h) the Torments of Hell, and (i) the Joys of

(d) The Northern Lass, page 1, line 5. and 7. p. 3. l. 29. p. 4. l. 8. p. 5. l. 10. p. 6. l. 30. p. 7. l. 25. p. 8. l. 2. p. 16. l. 33. p. 17. l. 12. p. 19. l. 7. p. 20. l. 27. p. 23. l. 20. p. 27. l. 36. p. 36. l. 33. p. 39. l. 21. p. 41. l. 29. p. 54. l. ult. p. 56. l. 18. p. 59. l. 18. and p. 60. l. 1, 3 and 15.

The Loyal Subject, page 27. line 16 and 29. p. 29. l. 18. p. 31. l. 40. p. 43. l. 5 and 15. p. 44. l. 35. p. 47. l. 38. p. 48. l. 7. p. 53. l. 4 and 11. p. 66. l. 29 and 35. and p. 69. l. 34. The Royal Merchant, page 12. line 5. p. 26. l. 32. p. 29. l. 25. p. 35. l. 6. and 20. p. 48. l. 21. p. 51. l. 4 and 15. p. 54. l. 13. p. 57. l. 27. p. 58. l. 12. p. 59. l. 18. and p. 71. l. 27 and 28.

(e) The Northern Lass, page 4. line 16. and p. 57. l. 20. The Loyal Subject, page 4. line 35. p. 12. l. 32, to the End. and p. 13. l. 1, to 17. p. 39. l. 42. p. 57. l. 28. and p. 73. l. 30. The Royal Merchant, page 49. line 6. p. 55. l. 27. and p. 56. l. 23.

(f) The Northern Lass, Prologue, line 20. Epilogue, line 23. page 3. line 21. Sheet E p. 24. l. 26. p. 39. l. 34. p. 40. l. 12. p. 44. l. antepenult. p. 55. l. 13. p. 65. l. 17. and p. 66. l. 4. The Loyal Subject, page 45. line 20. p. 47. l. 12. The Royal Merchant, page 28. line antepenult. p. 30. l. 29.

(g) The Northern Lass, page 40. line 5. The Royal Merchant, page 29. line 9.

(h) The Loyal Subject, page 31. line 40.

(i) The Loyal Subject, page 44. line 13.

O 4

Heaven;

(k) The Northern Lass, page 38. line 20. p. 39. l. 21. and p. 69. l. 27. *Heaven*; besides the Exposing of (k) *Magistrates* and (l) *Constables*, and *Ridiculing* the (m) *Notion of Divine Illumination*. Our *Actors* might have

(l) The Northern Lass, page 40. line 3. and p. 46. l. 1 &c. found much better *Plays* in the antient *Authors*; but perhaps, such might shame our present *Poets*, or disoblige their *Hearers*.

(m) Compare *Acts* 26. 18. with The Northern Lass, page 39. line 24.

Neither do they take only the worst of

(n) Page 14. (o) *Squire Treloby*, page 5. line 8. p. 5. l. 4, and 24. p. 11 l. antepenult. p. 13. l. 16. p. 39. l. 16. and ult. p. 49. l. 14. and 25. p. 52. l. 1. and 11. The *Metamorphosis*, page 29. line antepenult. p. 31. line 12. p. 36. l. 16. p. 40. l. 4 p. 51. l. 5. of foreign Countries. *Molier* could afford us from *France* such *Plays* as are built upon a *Moral Foundation*; but when a Part of his Works are translated for our *Diversion*, it must be either *The Metamorphosis*, where (n) the *Devil* is scandalously ador'd, or *Squire Treloby*, which at best, is good for nothing: And lest these *Dishes* should not please the *English Palate*, the *Translator* takes Care to set them off with all the Advantages of (o) *Swearing*, (p) *Cursing*, (q) *Invoking of*

(p) *Squire Treloby*, page 5, line 16 and 22. p. 9. l. 15. p. 26. l. 13. p. 36. l. 7. The *Metamorphosis*, page 18. line 6. p. 48. l. 4 and 17. p. 52. l. penult.

(q) *Squire Treloby*, page 21. line 5. p. 39, l. 28. The *Metamorphosis*, page 32. line 14, p. 41. l. 19.

the

the Devil, and (r) Adjuring in his Name, (s) Calling upon God on ridiculous Occasions, and Trifling with their Hopes of Salvation, and (u) the Truth of the Gospel, and (x) where the Translator had the Liberty to speak his own Sense, he largely exposes Religion and Reformation, the Clergy and Societies.

(r) Squire Trelooby, page 22. line 8. p. 38. l. 13.

(s) Squire Trelooby, page 20. line 1. and antepenult.

(t) Squire Trelooby, page 11. line 11.

(u) Squire Trelooby, page 40. line 17.

(x) Squire Trelooby, Prologue and Epilogue.

The Expressions in the *Italian Opera* call'd *The Temple of Love*, are inoffensive throughout, because the Translator (y) was confin'd to the same Number of Syllables which were in the Original; but lest there should be nothing to please the Humour of the Age, he inserts in (z) the *Epilogue* an Oath, by the *Death of God*.

(y) Title Page, line 5.

(z) Line 3.

Thus we see that our Plays are now grown to such an Height of Profaneness, that it is really a Penance for Good Men to read them, and offensive to all Christians to hear them. They sometimes chill the Blood, and must either fear the Conscience, or raise an Abhorrence. The Poets, like (a) evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

(a) 2 Tim. 3. 13.

They,

They have so far prevailed, in infecting Men's Minds, that there is now no Relish for any *Poetry*, but what is Scurrilous, Smutty, Immoral, Blasphemous and Profane. In this alone their Wit is shewn, and for this alone they are generally admired. If an English *Play* is less Scandalous than the Rest, it is rejected as dull and tedious; but if it bids Defiance to both *God* and *Man*, it is admired for its Life and Pertness. In the *Play-House* at the *Hay Market* there was only a Pretence of *Reformation*, but it prov'd so fatal, that the Undertakers were forc'd to desist, and have at their Cost shewn to the World, that even such a Pretence will ruin their Interest. The *Tragedy* call'd *Liberty Asserted*, had in the Main a good Design, viz. to expose the *French Tyranny*, and commend the *English Constitution*; but it met with such bad Success, that the *Poet* was oblig'd to vindicate himself in the *Preface*; and this so prejudiced the *Hearers*, that his following *Play* call'd *Gibraltar*, tho, of a contrary Nature, shar'd in the same Fate, and (a) had put the *Poet* out of Countenance, only he was supported by the Example of *Terence*, who

(a) See the
Preface.

who stood to it, that one of his Plays was good, when all the World condemn'd it. However this Gentleman is now forc'd to write like the rest of his Brethren, and to support his Credit, he afterwards stiles himself (b) the Author of *The Relapse*, and *The Provok'd Wife*, two Plays which were horridly Scandalous, and consequently the fittest to regain his Credit with the Stage. Neither was this the Fate of one Attempt of *Reforming Plays*, but others of the same Nature have had the same Misfortune. *The Lying Lover* is quite laid aside. *The Gamester* and *The Basset Table* are very rarely acted; and as there only seem'd to be a Design in them to reform these Vices, it was so fatal, that the scandalous Expressions in the Plays could not make Amends for so great a Mismanagement, and none of them could bear a Second Edition. On the Contrary, (c) the most Scandalous Plays are most frequently reprinted, and (d) *The Recruiting Officer* already bears a Second Edition. *The British Enchanters* was frequently acted, and the *Blasphemy* contain'd therein constantly made a full House, and had not the Devil been actually

(b) Title Page of *The Mistake*, and *The Confederacy*.

(c) *The Northern Lass*, the 6th Impression, 1706.

Love for Love, the 4th Impression, 1704.

The Spanish Fryar, the 2d Edition, 1704.

The Provok'd Wife, reprinted 1698, Six Courty Nice, mentioned in A Representation of the Impiety and Immorality of the English Stage, page 10, Reprinted 1703.

(d) Printed in March last, and reprinted in July.

(e) A Representation of the Impiety and Immorality of the English Stage.
Page 7.

actually ador'd his *Temple* had not at that Time been so Scandalously frequented. The horrid Comedies of *Love for Love*, *The provok'd Wife*, and *The Spanish Fryar*, are frequently acted in all Places to which the *Players* come. The more they have been expos'd by Mr. *Collier* and (e) others, the more they seem to be admir'd; and this may be the Reason of their frequent Publications from the Press as well as from the Stage. It is therefore too evident, that the *Play-House* Interest consists in promoting of *Vice*, and it cannot be reform'd, but the *Actors* must be ruin'd. Accordingly we find by sad Experience, that *Her Majesty's* pious Attempts, and the Endeavours of others are unsuccessful, and how then can we expect to have a greater Influence upon them? Should they be reformed a little while, for Fear of Shame and Punishment, yet this Fear will soon be over, and when once they think, that they can sin securely, they will return to their former *Vomit*, and wallow in the beloved *Mire*. The Time was when the *English Stage* dared not to blaspheme, but now it is their frequent Language, and the longer they are

are tolerated, the more they are guilty. Their *Methods* have so justly provok'd all, who have a *Zeal* for *God*, and *Love* for *Religion*, that they reckon it a *Scandal* to be seen in such a Place. The *Hearers* therefore are Persons of a different Character. and such who are chiefly delighted with *Profaneness* and *Impiety*. The *Poets* and *Actors* know, that if they should reform their *Plays*, they should disoblige their *Hearers*, and then the *Hopes* of their *Gains* would be gone; and for this Reason, like *Demetrius*, they exclaim against it. So that since Reason and Experience shews us the Impossibility that they should be reform'd, it is high Time that they should be *Suppress'd*.

This was the Case at *Athens*, where the *Stage* began. At first it met with all possible Encouragement, and a vast Fund was settled for its Maintainance, which (f) our present *Poets* often glory in. This so exhausted their *Treasure*, that (g) they had no *Mony* to set forth their *Ships*, or defend their *Country*; and by this Means their *Enemies* prevail'd against them. When the *Athenian Stage* was offensive, they appointed

(f) Liberty Asserted, Preface, line 1. The Basket Table, Dedication, line 4. The Stage Beaumont's'd in a Blanket, Dedication line 4. (g) Plutarch de Gloria Atheniensium.

(b) Plutarch
ibid.

(i) Chryso-
stomi Hom.
13, in 1 Cor.
4. Tom. 10.

appointed several Inspectors for its better Regulation. When this did not succeed, they passed a farther Censure, and made a Law, that (b) no *Magistrate*, or Judge of the *Areopagus*, should make a *Comedy*, because it was a disreputable Employment, and at last they (i) enacted, that Common *Actors* should from that Time be reputed infamous. Nay, *Horace* also observes, that (k) when the antient *Comedy* succeeded the *Tragick Poets*, they took too great a Liberty, insomuch that a Law was made against them, and accordingly they were suppress'd when they were not able to be abusive any longer.

(k) Horat. de Arte Poetica.

*Sucessit vetus his Comedia, non sine multâ
Laude; sed in vitium libertas excidit, & viti
Dignam lege regi: Lex est accepta, Chorusq;
Turpiter obscurit, sublato jure nocendi.*

(l) Ulysses,
Dedication, p.
2. line 4.
Zelmane, De-
dication, line
10.

The Antient Romans, whose Encouragement of the Stage is also (l) much boasted of, made a very early Law against them, in which they made them infamous, and ordain'd that none should be admitted to Court, the Bar, or the Senate, but should also be incapable

of any Military or other Honour and Esteem ; all which *Tertullian* recites, and then (m) asks this Question, *What a Confession is this, that these Things are evil ; since the Actors, when they were in the greatest Esteem, were thus branded with a Mark of Disgrace ?* And I cannot but think, it is as great an Argument of a bad Cause, when its Abettors urge such Scraps of Stories to support it, which when truly related, are so full against it. Besides, these are all *Pagan* Instances. The *Greeks* and *Romans* were without God and his *Laws* : They were (n) *afar off*, they were *aliens* to the *commonwealth* of *Israel*, and *strangers* from the *covenant of promise*, having no hope, and *Atheoi*, *Atheists*, or without God in the world ; they were such Men, who (o) did not like to retain God in their knowledge, and therefore God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient. These are the Countries, where the Devil ruled among the children of disobedience. These are the Places where he generally deluded the People from his Oracles, returned Answers to such as came to enquire of him, and directed them,

(m) Lib.
De Specta-
culis, page
699, Edit.
Basil. 1562.

(n) Eph. 2.
12, 13.

(o) Rom.
1. 28.

them, according as he thought most convenient for his own Interest: And therefore we need not be proud of *Plays*, because they were invented in *Greece*, and promoted at *Rome*.

To these *Pagan* Examples I shall add others, which I take to be more material, and do accordingly affirm, That in all those Countries, where the *Patriarchs* travailed, and where *God* revealed his will, either by himself, his *Angels* or his *Prophets*, and in all those Countries, where the *Israelites* sojourned, as well as in the *Land of Canaan*, where they afterward lived, there was no such thing either known, or perhaps so much as talk'd of. For this Reason, there is no Word either in the *Hebrew* or *Chaldee Languages*, to signify a *Comedy* or a *Tragedy*. The Words also in (p) *Arabick* are evidently of a *Greek* Derivation, which were borrowed from thence in after Ages, and (q) an *Eastern Historian* tells us, that these Kinds of Poetry were invented in *Thessaly*, which is a Part of *Greece*. Nay, when the *Jews* had altered their *Language* into the *Syriack*, by a Mixture of *Chaldee* and *Greek*, occasioned by their

(p) קומדיא

Κωμωδία.

טראגדיא

Τραγωδία.

(g) Abu'l

Pharagij,

Historia

Dynastiarum

pag. 33.

their Captivity in one Nation, and their Commerce with the other, even then the Name of a *Comedy* was so odious, that the very (r) Word was used, at that Time, only to signify a Curse, Disparagement, and a Reproach.

(r) קלרר

When (s) a Place of Exercise was first built in *Judea*, to introduce only the *Grecian Games*, it usher'd in a Contempt of Religion, a Neglect of the Sacrifices, and many other Calamities; and the Reason is mentioned. For it

(s) 1 Mac- cab. 1. 11, 12, 13, 14. and 2 Mac- cab. 4. 7 to 18.

is not a light thing to do wickedly against the law of God. When Herod

built a Theatre within *Jerusalem*, about thirty years before the Birth of

(t) Jose- phus Jewish Antiquities, Book 15, Chap. 11.

Christ, (t) the Jews interrupted it, as a manifest Corruption of those Dis-

These two Quotations, from the

ciplines and Manners, which they had entertained and honoured among them;

Maccabees and Josephus are so full, that the Reader is desired to peruse them at large.

and accordingly it was opposed with the greatest Zeal and Indignation. For

(saith Josephus) it was an Impious thing to change and profane the Ordinances of the Country for Foreign Exercises.

Neither was this Zeal only in the Time of the Law, but it rather increased under the Gospel. The Primitive Christians did not frequent the

P Shews,

- Shews* which were made for the Entertainment of the People. They look'd upon the Publick Sports and Pastimes of those Days, (u) as the *Scenes* not only of *Folly* and *Lewdness*, but of great *Impiety* and *Idolatry*, as Places, where the *Devil* eminently rul'd, and reckon'd all his *Votaries*, who went thither. Their Abstaining from the *Stage* was so evident, that the *Heathen* in (x) *Mimucius Felix* roundly charges them with it, and reckons it as a Crime, which when *Ostavius* the *Christian* answers, he (y) owns the Charge, but denies the Guilt, and tells him, that there was good Reason to abstain from such *Shews*, *Pomps* and *Diversions*, at which they could not be present without great *Sin* and *Shame*; without affronting their *Modesty*, and offering a Distast and Horrour to their *Minds*: And *Tertullian* tells us (z) that upon any Man's Conversion to Christianity he immediately abstain'd from the *Stage*, and that his Abstaining was a Principal Sign of his Conversion. Nay, they were so strict, that (a) if any Pagan, who was a profess'd Actor on, or Frequenter on the *Stage*, desir'd to turn *Christian*, he was first to renounce all
- (u) Dr. Caves Primitive Christianity, Part 2. Chap. 2. Pag. 32.
- (x) Pag. 34. Oxon. Edit.
- (y) Page 106.
- (z) Lib. de Spectaculis, pag. 700.
- (a) Concilium Eliberitanum, Can. 62. Theodoret. contra Græcos infideles, Lib. 8.

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all such *Actings*, and promise to forsake them for the future, before he could be admitted into the Church by Baptism: And if any Christian did afterward (b) act upon the Stage, he was excluded from the Church, the Sacraments, and all Christian Society, until he had utterly abjur'd the same, and solemnly protested to return to it no more. And the Reason assign'd is, because it was not fit, that the Modesty and Honour of Christ's Church should be defil'd by such a polluted and infamous Contagion. And therefore, I think we have greater Reason to imitate the Jews and purest Christians in this Case, than the Pagan Greeks and Romans.

(b) Concilium Eliberinum; Can. 62. Cypriani ad Eucratium Epist. lib. 1. Epist. 10.

But to urge this farther. In all the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament, there is not a Word to recommend such Diversions. In all the Ecclesiastical Writers of the four first Centuries, there is no tone Expression in Favour of the Stage, and there are very few who do not set themselves directly against it. The Fathers constantly express their Resentments, without any Limitation, and exclaim against it, as a thing positively evil in it self, as the very Nest of Iniquity, the Synagogue

of Satan, the Bane of Religion, the Pomp and Vanity of this wicked World, which a Christian renounceth in his Baptismal Vow, and the In-let to all Vice and Profaneness, and constantly plead for its total Suppression. I shall not mention any particular Quotations,

(c) His Short View of the Stage, from page 250, to page 276.

because Mr. Collier hath (c) largely given us the Sence of the Fathers on this Subject, and yet he hath not said half which may be produced. However, it may not be improper to observe, that they all condemn the Plays for two Reasons.

First, because of their Immorality and Profaneness. This Argument hath been applyed by several eminent Pens against our English Stage; and yet they will not reform, but continue as bad as ever, as if they resolved that nothing should reclaim them.

Secondly, They were condemn'd upon the Score of Idolatry. As they represented some Parts of Pagan Worship, so under that Notion they were unlawful to Christians. Mr. Collier indeed tells us

(d) De- (d) that since this Reason expir'd in a fence of his great Measure with the Heathen Religion; Short View, he should not insist upon it. He was Page 133. willing to own them not guilty. However,

ever, they have since reviv'd even the *Pagan Superstition*; as if they would give Force to all the *Arguments* of the *Primitive Fathers*, and put it out of any Man's Power, to make an *Apology* for them. Accordingly (e) the *Pictures* of these *Gods* are represented on the *Stage*, Faithful Gen-
their *Temples* are fill'd with *Votaries*, neral, page
their *Altars* flame with *Sacrifices*, and 25.
the *Attributes* of the true *God* are as-
crib'd to the *Devil* and *Pagan Deities*.
This is the *Reformation* in the *Play-
House*, and what they aim at is too
plainly seen.

If we do but tell them of a Crime from which they are free, it is the ready Way to make them guilty: And if we do but tell them of a Fault in the *Heathen Poets*, they will exceed it, as if they resolved to out-vye with them in every exceptionable Passage, and make the *Play-House* a common Receptacle for all Uncleannefs. Mr. Collier only tells us, that (f) *Chærea* in view of the
Terence falls into an ill Rapture after Stage, page
his Success in *Debauching* a Virgin; and 86.
since, we find this Rapture far out done (g) The
in (g) a *Modern Tragedy* upon the like Rival Bro-
Occasion. thers, page
72.

It is therefore a dreadful thing to consider the Guilt of our *present Stage*, after all the Attempts for a *Reformation*, and Bearing so long in *Hopes* thereof; and it is as strange to hear others excuse all this, by saying, *That the Poets and Actors design no Harm, it is their Maintainance, what they do is but in Jest, and intended only for Diversion.*

If *Designing no Harm* is an Excuse for the *Stage*, I doubt it may be pleaded for *Common Swearers, Cursers, Drunkards, and Profaners of the Lords Day.* All these will as truly say they do mean no *Harm.* This Argument will take off the Guilt from all *Sins of Ignorance,* But if *Harm* attends it, no Excuse can be admitted. We must not do Evil, that Good may come of it; and much less can we excuse our Evil by saying, we intend no *Harm.* If it must be allowed, because some are thereby maintain'd, this will be a good Plea for the *Roman Stews,* our *Common Beggars,* all sorts of *Rogues* and *Vagabonds,* and all unlawful *Callings* whatsoever. This was an Argument (b) of *Demetrius* for *Pagan Worship.* it pleaded against suppressing of

(b) Act
19. 25.

of all *Monasteries*, and might have hinder'd our *Reformation* from *Popery*, and we may as well argue, that there are a great many People maintain'd by the *War*, and therefore we must never have *Peace*. If it is an ill Calling, the greater Number concern'd makes it so much the worse; and the Enemy thereby is become more formidable. If they were to be encouraged in their Proceedings, because they could not live without it, there is no *High-Way-Man*, *Thief*, or *Pickpocket*, who would not urge the same Excuse at the Bar. But if Necessity made them at first think of this way for a Livelihood, the same Necessity may make them again think of some other.

The Excuse that *it is but in Jest* was never admitted among the *Heathen*. *Xenophon* (i) tells us of a *Persian Schoolmaster* who excercised his *Scholars* to lye, backbite and cheat, and made them practise these things in jest among themselves. By this *Method* it happened, that his *Scholars*, being apt to learn, began to deceive, cheat and steal from others, and even from their Friends; and tho' this *Schoolmaster* had taught them, that they ought not to do it, and intended

(i) De Cy-
ri Instituti-
one, lib. 13

only to expose *Vice*, that they might abhor it; yet what was taught by *Example*, could not be prevented by *Precept*, until the *Persians* made a *Law* to forbid such *Representations*. When

(k) Plu-
tarch and Di-
ogenes Laer-
tius, *de Vita*
Solonis.

(k) Solon beheld *Thespis* acting a *Tragedy*, wherein there were many *Lyes* and *Cheats*, he asked; If he was not ashamed to lye and cheat before so great a Multitude, in so notorious a Manner? To which *Thespis* answer'd, That there was no Hurt in it; it was all in *Jest*, and nothing in *Earnest*. But *Solon* immediately stroke his Staff upon the Ground with Indignation, and made this Answer; *If we commend or approve of this Play, the Jest will turn to Earnest, and we shall quickly find it in our Bargains*. This was an Answer full to the Purpose, and perhaps for this Reason, he is burlesqu'd

(l) De Ar-
te Poetica.

He Nuge
seria ducent
in mala.

(m) Prov.

14. 9.

(n) Prov.

13. 20.

(o) Prov.

26. 18, 19.

etb firebrands, arrows and death; So

in a modern *Comedy*. *Horace* was (l) also of the Opinion, that *Trifles* and *Jests* will bring a Man into real *Mischiefs* and *Inconveniencies*. Besides, *Solomon* tells us (m) that they are *Fools*, who thus make a mock at *Sin*, and (n) A companion of such fools shall be destroy'd: And that (o) As a mad man, who cast-

is he that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith; Am not I in sport? And St. Paul speaking (p) of some things, which were not to be named among Christians, mentions the three Stage-Vices, namely, Filthiness, Foolish talking and Jesting, which he again tells us, are not convenient. The Advocates of the Stage excuse what is said, because it is only a Jesting Matter. St. Paul condemns it for the same Reason; and therefore, if their Argument is good, the Apostle is mistaken. Besides the Stage jests with such things, as are not to be jested with. Can we swear, curse, blaspheme, mock God, ridicule Religion, and burlesque the Scriptures in Jest? Can we make a Jest of Hell, and not expose our selves to the Miseries of that Place? These Sports and Jests call for Judgments in earnest. A Tempest on the Stage may afterward be sent on the Nation. Magical Representations may provoke God, until the Devil is let loose to act more dismal Tragedies. When Devils carry Men to Hell in Jest, and the Stage opens for this Purpose, we may dread the Fate of Korah, Dathan and Abiram; and whilst Fire and Brimstone is raining in the Play-House, we may tremble

(p) Ephes.

5. 3. 4.

tremble to think on *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*.

In the Midst of these our late Representations, *God* hath bless'd this Nation with wonderful Success, with signal and unexpected Victories, with a Prospect both of *Peace abroad* and *Peace at Home*; but if his *Goodness*, his *Forbearance* and *Long suffering* do not lead us to repentance, if we thus suffer him to be despis'd, affronted and abus'd, if he hath Cause to complain, that his Name continually every day is blasphemed, his Mercies may yet be turn'd into Judgments, and a worse thing may come upon us for so great an Ingratitude.

To conclude, When *Religion* and the *Scriptures* are made the Jest of the *Play-House*, when *God* and his Judgments are despis'd and slighted, then it is high Time to suppress such Places of *Iniquity*, and they, who value any thing that is sacred, ought to oppose such, who thus profane it. When the *Poet's Hands*, like *Ishmael*, are against every man, then every mans hand ought to be against them. The *Actors* pretend to be Her Majesties Servants, and yet value not Her Orders, but provoke

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God to blast Her Designs for the Good of this Nation. Whilst others expound the *Scriptures* for the *Salvation* of Mankind, these *ungodly* Men *pervert* them (as it is to be fear'd) to *their own*, and their Hearers *Destruction*: And if the *Reformation* of Manners, which they pretend to aim at should succeed accordingly, God must be dethron'd, the Devil ador'd, *Virtues* suppress'd, *Vice* encourag'd, the *Churches* destroy'd, and then the *Play-Houses* will be frequented. In short, *Hell* is broken loose among us, and we have *Schools* erected in several *Cities* of this Nation, to teach the *Language of the Damn'd*. The Horreur of their Expressions needs no farther Discovery, and calls for a greater Warmth than I am able to express. I therefore beg and intreat all such, who have any Regard for the Glory of God, any Hopes of his *Mercy*, or Fear of his *Judgments*, any Value for the *Scriptures*, or Love for *Religion*, that they will abstain from such Places; and not be partakers with them in their evil deeds, and that they will in their several Stations, discourage all such *Acts*, as a Scandal to *Christianity*, and a Method which may provoke God, af-
ter

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ter so many *Mercies* abus'd, to enter into *Judgment*. We justly abhor the *Popish Mass*, because they pray to *Saints* departed, and can we think it a less Crime, to be present in those *Assemblies*, where the *Devil* is invok'd, and his Name frequently mention'd in their *Ejaculations*? If it was the Honour of our *Fore-Fathers*, to oppose the *Worshipping* of *Saints*, and the *Ave-Marias*, even to Death, their Memory will be a Disgrace to us, if we oppose not those, who like the *Indians* worship the *Devil*, with an *Hail Powers beneath*, as if we thought, that such *Abominations* did not deserve our *Resentments*. I know not what can excuse our *Remissness*, unless we imagine, that the *Devils* in *Hell* ought to have that *Respect*, which we justly deny to the *Virgin Mary*, and the *Saints* in *Heaven*. I beg, that such as read this Book, will frequently put up their *Prayers* to *God*, to deliver us from such monstrous *Practices*. The *Psal-*

(q) *Psal.* 74 11 and 23. *mist* hath long since (q) given us a Pattern. O God, how long shall the Adversary do this dishonour? How long shall the enemy blaspheme thy name for ever? Arise, O God, maintain thine own cause: remember how the foolish

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*man blasphemeth thee daily. And I hope,
that all good Christians will learn to
abhor the Abominations of the Play-
House, as often as they use the Ex-
pressions in our Excellent Litany.*

*From all the Deceits of the World,
the Flesh and the Devil ; and From
Hardness of Heart, and Contempt of
thy Word and Commandment ;*

Good Lord deliver us.

Copies

**Copies of several Presentments of
the Grand Juries, against the
Play-House lately erected in the
City of Bristol.**

*The Presentment of the Grand Jury,
met at the General Quarter-Sessions
of the Peace, the Sixth Day of Decem-
ber, 1704.*

WE the Grand Jurors for our
Sovereign Lady the Queen,
for the Body of the County of this
City do, as in Conscience and Duty
bound, acknowledge the good Endeavours
that have been used by this
Worshipful Bench, for some Years past,
to discourage Immorality and Profane-
ness, by bringing under Restraint, and
endeavouring to suppress those evil
Methods by which they were promo-
ted and encouraged, such as *Musick-
Houses*, and other *Lewd and Disorderly
Houses*, the *Exercise of Unlawful Games*,
the *extravagant Number of Ale-Houses*,
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Tipling, or idle Walking on the Lord's Day, profane Cursing and Swearing, Acting of Plays and Interludes; which Endeavours tending to God's Glory, your Zeal and Forwardness therein hath justly gain'd you the Esteem and Honour of all good People of this City and the adjacent Counties, to whom you have not only shewed a good Example, but encouraged to prosecute so good a Work: and we are also with all humble Submission bound to represent the sad Apprehensions we have of the same Evils again breaking in upon us worse than formerly, by the Increase of the great Number of *Tipling-Houses*, kept by such, who in Contempt of Justice sell Ale without License, (the Lord's Day being much profan'd by *Tipling* in such Houses) and also by the great Concourse of People in publick Places under Pretence of hearing News on that Day. But that which puts us more especially under these sad Apprehensions, is the late Permission given to the *Publick Stage*, within the Liberties of this City, from whence some have conceiv'd Hopes, it shall be tolerated always; and Countenance, or at least Connivance giv'n
to

to *Acting* of Plays and *Interludes* within this City and County, which (if it should be) will exceedingly eclipse the good Order and Government of this City, corrupt and debauch our Youth, and utterly ruin many *Apprentices* and *Servants*, already so *Unruly* and *Licentious*, that they are with great Difficulty kept under any reasonable Order or Government by their Masters.

We could wish that these our sad Apprehensions were groundless: But, when in all Ages, *Acting of Plays* and *Interludes* hath been attended with all manner of *Profaneness*, *Lewdness*, *Murthers*, *Debauching* and *Ruining Youth of both Sexes*, infusing *Principles of Idleness* and *Extravagancy* into all People that resort to them. We hope your Worships seriously will consider of Effectual Methods to prevent them, and with the greatest Zeal and Fervency will put the same in Execution, when it is apparent that all the Methods to correct and keep them within modest Bounds (where they are tolerated) have proved ineffectual: And all Wise Men are convinced that there is no Methods of hindering or preventing their Mischiefs, but by totally suppressing

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pressing them. Your Worships Task is not so difficult, Preventing Remedies being more natural and easy than Punishing. And we humbly conceive you have Reasons more cogent to stir you up to this Work, than offer themselves to Cities and Places where they have been tolerated, abounding with Gentry and Nobility, whose Estates and Leisure render such Extravagancies more tolerable. But if in such Places, their direful and calamitous Effects have been so sensibly felt, how much more in a City not to be upheld but by Trade and Industry, will they be insupportable? We therefore do not doubt but all the due Care will be taken by your Worships to redress and prevent these Grievances, that a Stop may be put to the further Progress of Immorality and Profaneness, and the Work of Reformation carried on, so earnestly press'd by Her Majesty's Proclamation, whose Pious Endeavours God has so signally owned in the great Victories with which he hath blessed Her Arms, whose Glorious Example we doubt not but you will follow, to your lasting Honour and Renown, and

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the

the Encouragement and Comfort of
all good Citizens.

Walter Chapman, &c.

*Part of the Presentment of the Grand
Jury, met at the General Quarter-
Sessions of the Peace, the 10th Day
of August, 1706.*

WE present Mr. Power, and his
Company, for Acting of Plays
within the Liberties of this City,
without your Worships Leave and
Consent.

Isaac Foord, &c.

*Part of the Presentment of the Grand
Jury, met at the General Assize of
Goal Delivery, the 15th Day of
August, 1706.*

WE must not here omit to Declare
how much it afflicts our Thoughts,
That after so great Obligations to Di-
vine Benignity in the late wonderful
Revolution: And in Her Majesty's se-
curing

curing to us, our *Religion, Liberties,* and *Properties*, then restored: And in Her Pious Zeal to convey these *Privileges* to Posterity, by Her repeated *Proclamations* against all *Vice* and *Immorality*, newly rehearsed to us, that yet the worthy Designs thereof are not effectually attained, nor *Wickedness* so intirely suppressed by the active Endeavours of our Magistrates, as we could heartily wish. For which End, we would humbly recommend to Your **Worships** utmost Care and unanimous Zeal, to search out and pursue the most effectual and lawful Methods for crushing the newly erected *Play-House*, that *School of Debauchery* and *Nursery of Profaneness*, where *Vice* and *Lewdness* appear Bare-faced, and Impudent, *Swearing* notoriously Practised and Recommended: The Danger and Growth of which, we have been seasonably warned against by our Right Reverend the Lord Bishop, and other Reverend Divines from the Pulpit.

Richard Leversedge, &c.

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ERRATA.

PAGE 11, line 15, read farther. l. 24 and 25, for in- into, read inspect. p. 16, l. 5, for were fine, r. we find. p. 19, l. 14, r. profane. p. 21, l. 13, r. Architect. p. 24, l. 11, r. fine, and l. 21, after and, r. is. p. 26, l. antepenult, r. wilderness. p. 27, l. 5, after but, r. to. p. 41, l. 16, r. foreign. p. 96, l. 22, r. they. p. 102, l. 19, r. wrong. p. 111, l. 16, r. moral. p. 123, l. 23, r. divorc'd. p. 129, l. 23, r. and. p. 139, l. 9, r. exhort. p. 143, l. 17, dele of. p. 148 l. 17, r. Tho' these are foreign. p. 149, l. 7, r. Soldiers. and l. 27, after others, r. were. p. 154, l. 2, r. Soldiers. p. 161, l. 25, before that, r. and. p. 162, l. 14, after with, r. the. p. 169, l. 19, for any, r. all. p. 190, l. 5, dele for it. p. 192, l. 26, r. Christian. p. 198, l. 9, r. Oxford. p. 201, l. antepenult, r. Abhorrence. p. 204, l. 10, r. be. p. 206, l. ult, after but, r. they should be. p. 209, l. 13 and 14, r. against, and l. 17, r. interpreted. p. 210, l. penult, r. of the Stage. p. 211, l. 23, r. not one, and l. 25, after few, r. Authors; and p. 214, l. 21, r. excuse.

Besides these, there are some literal Mistakes, and others in Pointing &c. which the Reader is desired to correct.

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SERIOUS Reflections on the scandalous Abuse and Effects of the *Stage*: In a Sermon, Preach'd at the Parish-Church of St. *Nicolas* in the City of *Bristol*, on Sunday the 7th Day of *January*, 1705.

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